Montana Outdoors

MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

MARCH–APRIL 2021

The 50th

ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

Montana Outdoors

FIRST PLACE MAGAZINE:
2005, 2006, 2008, 2011, 2017, 2018
Association for
Conservation Information

MONTANA OUTDOORS
VOLUME 52, NUMBER 2

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Montana Outdoors (ISSN 0027-0016) is published bimonthly by Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks in partnership with our subscribers. Subscription rates are $12 for one year, $20 for two years, and $27 for three years. (Please add $3 per year for Canadian subscriptions. All other foreign subscriptions, airmail only, are $48 for one year.) Individual copies and back issues cost $4.50 each (includes postage). Although ***Montana Outdoors*** is copyrighted, permission to reprint articles is available by writing our office or phoning us at (406) 495-3257. All correspondence should be addressed to: ***Montana Outdoors***, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, 930 West Custer Avenue, P.O. Box 200701, Helena, MT 59620-0701. Website: **fwp.mt.gov/mtoutdoors**. Email: **montanaoutdoors@mt.gov**.
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For address changes or subscription information call **800-678-6668**.
In Canada call **1+ 406-495-3257**

Postmaster: Send address changes to ***Montana Outdoors***, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, P.O. Box 200701, Helena, MT 59620-0701. Preferred periodicals postage paid at Helena, MT 59601, and additional mailing offices.

FSC MIX Paper FSC® C007548

COLLECTOR'S EDITION The 50 bound volumes of *Montana Outdoors*, from 1970 through 2020. From its inception, the magazine of Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks has covered the major issues affecting the state's outdoor life—from pollution degrading trout streams to pandemic-weary visitors overwhelming state parks. Throughout the decades, the publication has aimed to ensure that readers know what's happening in Montana's natural world, while providing stunning wildlife and scenic photography, delicious recipes, and other entertaining fare along the way. Photo by Thom Bridge.

Montana Outdoors

MARCH–APRIL 2021

Hip hip hooray!

This March-April 2021 issue commemorates the 50th anniversary of *Montana Outdoors*, a bimonthly publication of Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks.

One thing we're celebrating is this magazine's half century of fostering public involvement in fish, wildlife, and state park stewardship. FWP is ultimately responsible for that stewardship, but because those public resources exist in a diverse patchwork of public, private, and tribal lands, the department can't do it alone. It needs the help of stockgrowers, tribes, farmers, communities, outdoor recreationists, businesses, and everyone else who cares about wildlife, state parks, and fish.

To provide that help, people need to know what's going on. That's where *Montana Outdoors* comes in.

Since 1970 the magazine has shown what FWP biologists, technicians, park managers, and others are doing across the state. It highlights big issues driving those activities and explains the underlying science. With this information, Montanans can engage with FWP in public forums and discuss how best to steward the state's precious parks, wildlife populations, and fisheries.

Another thing worth celebrating? The fact that this magazine regularly publicizes the department's policies, plans, achievements, and, yes, even mistakes. Talk about government transparency. By publishing *Montana Outdoors* every eight weeks, FWP is literally an open book.

This issue also commemorates the remarkable longevity of a print magazine—delivered to most readers in the form of ink on paper—in today's digital world. And not just any magazine, but a *general-interest* magazine. These days, many media focus on narrow subject matter aimed at niche readerships. *Montana Outdoors* bucks the trend. We cover a broad range of outdoor topics, from protecting trout tributaries and conserving grassland songbirds to braising venison shanks and taking kids camping for the first time.

And we deliver that coverage to a broad mix of readers. Ranchers, farmers, and other large landowners subscribe to *Montana Outdoors*. So do anglers, birders, hikers, hunters, outfitters, campers, boaters, fishing guides, and the many subscribers across the country who simply love Montana.

Our readers are young and old, individuals and families, rural ranchers and urban health care workers.

The intellectual cross-pollination that comes from all those different people reading *Montana Outdoors* promotes mutual understanding about what's happening in our state's natural world. It creates a sense of common cause. It may even generate greater empathy with different points of view.

These days, that alone is worth a sustained round of applause.

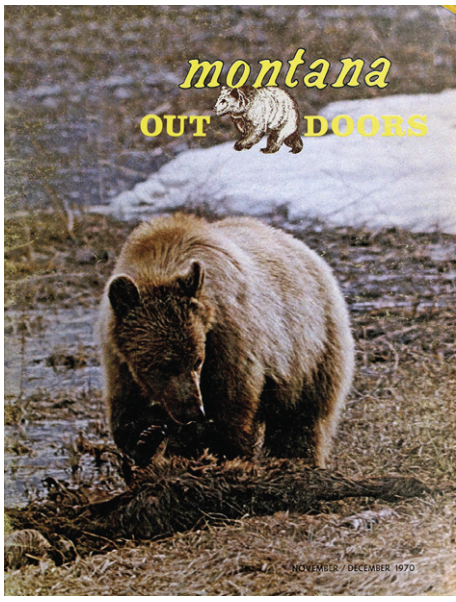
Finally, all of us here at *Montana Outdoors* would like to celebrate (and thank) you, our subscribers. Without your ongoing interest and support, this magazine would not exist.

—Tom Dickson, Editor

Note: All text in this issue is by the editor unless otherwise noted.

MONTANA OUTDOORS' GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY

A history of the popular FWP magazine's first half century (1970-2020)



Top: NASA's "Earthrise" photo by Apollo 8 astronaut Bill Anders, December 24, 1968.

Above: Cover of the first issue of *Montana Outdoors* magazine, November-December 1970.

The first issue of *Montana Outdoors* came off the press in November 1970 just as Montana and the nation had entered what became known as the Environmental Decade.

Rivers stank with industrial and municipal waste, air pollutants blocked the sun, species like the peregrine falcon and bald eagle fluttered on the brink of extinction. Montanans and other Americans demanded breathable air, clean water, and greater protection for land and wildlife.

The Fish and Game Department, as it was known then, launched the magazine to help it address at least some of those concerns. As 22-year-old editor Bill Schneider explained in the inaugural issue, the publication aimed to fulfill the agency's obligation "to fight for the wise use of Montana's abundant natural resources," and coincided with the agency's new tagline: "A livable environment for wildlife is a quality environment for man."

> **"The Montana you and I know may be about to disappear before our very eyes."**

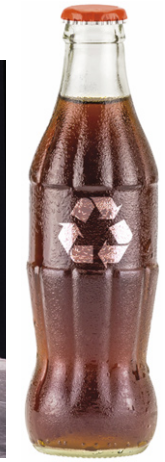
Using a widely read publication to voice the agency's environmental concerns was nothing new. *Montana Wildlife*, a predecessor publication, regularly ran features like "Danger: Polluted Water," which in 1954 called on state leaders to pass legislation protecting rivers and streams from pulp mill effluent and municipal sewage.

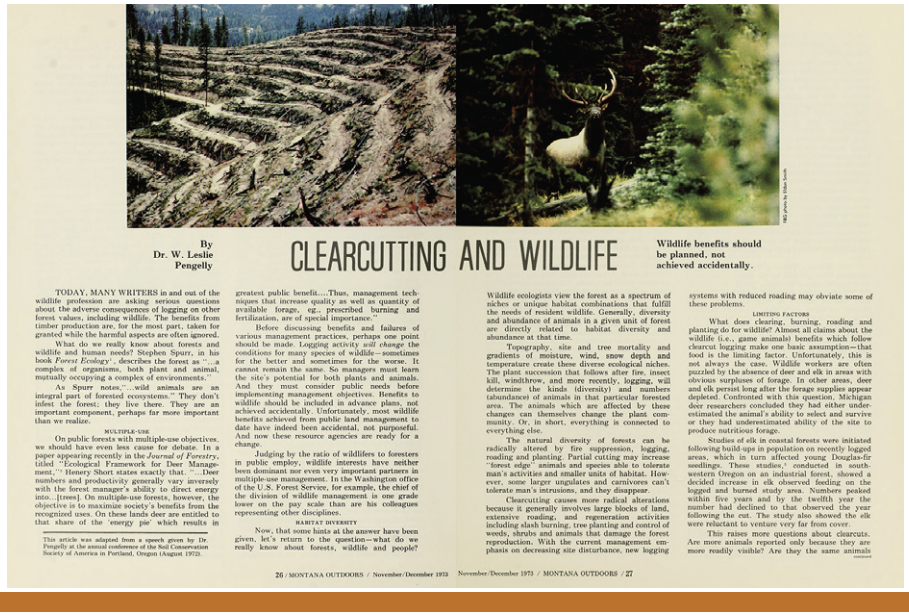
In addition to foul water, *Montana Outdoors* explored (in a four-part series) the potential harm to fish and wildlife of a federal proposal (the North Central Power Study) to build 42 new coal-burning power plants in southeastern Montana and northeastern Wyoming. Though the projects would have lowered taxes and added jobs, they also would have required digging up 1,000 square miles of land, diverting one-third of the Yellowstone River and tributaries to cool generators, and flooding Paradise Valley with a 31-mile-long reservoir. Eastern Montana's population would triple in size. "The Montana you and I know may be about to disappear before our very eyes," wrote FWP director Don L. Brown in a 1972 editorial.

The fledgling magazine also devoted an entire issue to the state's fast-growing population and resulting housing developments, which were eating up wildlife habitat, cattle range, and farmland. "We intend to continue talking about issues such as growth, subdivision development, and others, because these things can forever change the face of this state. We have an obligation to talk about these issues," wrote director Wes Woodgerd in 1975.

Using extensive research, groundbreaking reporting, and thorough documentation, *Montana Outdoors* explained how runoff from forest clear-cuts silted trout stream gravel, warned of proposed chromite mining that could scar the Beartooth Range, and introduced readers to a new term—"channelization"—caused when new highway construction straightened natural meanders of adjacent streams and eliminated critical fish habitat.

"[We] are concerned about water pollution and land abuse because the land and water support our valuable renewable resources, fish, and wildlife," director Frank H. Dunkle, who eventually became director of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, wrote justifying the agency's staunch environmentalism.





By
Dr. W. Leslie
Pengelly

CLEARCUTTING AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife benefits should be planned, not achieved accidentally.

TODAY, MANY WRITERS in and out of the wildlife profession are asking serious questions about the adverse consequences of logging on other forest values, including wildlife. The benefits from timber production are, for the most part, taken for granted while the harmful aspects are often ignored.

What do we really know about forests and wildlife and human needs? Stephen Spurr, in his book *Forest Ecology*', describes the forest as "...a complex of organisms, both plant and animal, mutually occupying a complex of environments."

As Spurr notes, "...wild animals are an integral part of forested ecosystems." They don't infest the forest; they live there. They are an important component, perhaps far more important than we realize.

MULTIPLE-USE

On public forests with multiple-use objectives, we should have even less cause for debate. In a paper appearing recently in the *Journal of Forestry*, titled "Ecological Framework for Deer Management," Henery Short states exactly that. "...Deer numbers and productivity generally vary inversely with the forest manager's ability to direct energy into... [uses]. On multiple-use forests, however, the objective is to maximize society's benefits from the recognized uses. On these lands deer are entitled to that share of the 'energy pie' which results in

This article was adapted from a speech given by Dr. Pengelly at the annual conference of the Soil Conservation Society of America in Portland, Oregon (August 1972).

greatest public benefit....Thus, management techniques that increase quality as well as quantity of available forage, eg., prescribed burning and fertilization, are of special importance.

Before discussing benefits and failures of various management practices, perhaps one point should be made. Logging activity *will change* the conditions for many species of wildlife—sometimes for the better and sometimes for the worse. It cannot remain the same. So managers must learn the site's potential for both plants and animals. And they must consider public needs before implementing management objectives. Benefits to wildlife should be included in advance plans, not achieved accidentally. Unfortunately, most wildlife benefits achieved from public land management to date have indeed been accidental, not purposeful. And now these resource agencies are ready for a change.

Judging by the ratio of wildlifers to foresters in public employ, wildlife interests have neither been dominant nor even very important partners in multiple-use management. In the Washington office of the U.S. Forest Service, for example, the chief of the division of wildlife management is one grade lower on the pay scale than are his colleagues representing other disciplines.

HABITAT DIVERSITY

Now, that some hints at the answer have been given, let's return to the question—what do we really know about forests, wildlife and people?

Wildlife ecologists view the forest as a spectrum of niches or unique habitat combinations that fulfill the needs of resident wildlife. Generally, diversity and abundance of animals in a given unit of forest are directly related to habitat diversity and abundance at that time.

Topography, site and tree mortality and gradients of moisture, wind, snow depth and temperature create these diverse ecological niches. The plant succession that follows after fire, insect kill, windthrow, and more recently, logging, will determine the kinds (diversity) and numbers (abundance) of animals in that particular forested area. The animals which are affected by these changes can themselves change the plant community. Or, in short, everything is connected to everything else.

The natural diversity of forests can be radically altered by fire suppression, logging, roading and planting. Partial cutting may increase "forest edge" animals and species able to tolerate man's activities and smaller units of habitat. However, some larger ungulates and carnivores can't tolerate man's intrusions, and they disappear.

Clearcutting causes more radical alterations because it generally involves large blocks of land, extensive roading, and regeneration activities including slash burning, tree planting and control of weeds, shrubs and animals that damage the forest reproduction. With the current management emphasis on decreasing site disturbance, new logging systems with reduced roading may obviate some of these problems.

LIMITING FACTORS

What does clearing, burning, roading and planting do for wildlife? Almost all claims about the wildlife (i.e., game animals) benefits which follow clearcut logging make one basic assumption—that food is the limiting factor. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. Wildlife workers are often puzzled by the absence of deer and elk in areas with obvious surpluses of forage. In other areas, deer and elk persist long after the forage supplies appear depleted. Confronted with this question, Michigan deer researchers concluded they had either underestimated the animal's ability to select and survive or they had underestimated ability of the site to produce nutritious forage.

Studies of elk in coastal forests were initiated following build-ups in population on recently logged areas, which in turn affected young Douglas-fir seedlings. These studies," conducted in southwestern Oregon on an industrial forest, showed a decided increase in elk observed feeding on the logged and burned study area. Numbers peaked within five years and by the twelfth year the number had declined to that observed the year following the cut. The study also showed the elk were reluctant to venture very far from cover.

This raises more questions about clearcuts. Are more animals reported only because they are more readily visible? Are they the same animals

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SELLEY LAKE PINE ADDITION
RED RANCH REALTY
LAND
THE SUBDIVIDERS ARE COMING.
THE SUBDIVIDERS ARE HERE!
article by Bill Schneider
illustrations by Vern Craig
I'll venture a guess that most of us have, at some time in our lives, dreamed of a quiet place in the country—just right for a few horses, a wilderness cabin by a singing stream or a hilltop chalet with stunning vistas pouring in through glass walls.
So it is with human nature. And so it is that Montana has a conservation crisis.
Indeed, the subdividers are here—in droves. I want very much to tell you how fast Montana's landscape is disappearing beneath concrete, homes, lawns and roads—how fast the public is losing access to prime recreation areas—how seriously our streams and lakes are being polluted and how much wildlife habitat is being lost.
But I can't, because nobody knows. We must learn this. But, even more important, Montana needs a stronger grip on the development of rural land for homesites.
Hopefully, the following article will meet its calling and help bring a concerned public to arms to control the selling of Montana.
TREASURE STATE REALTORS
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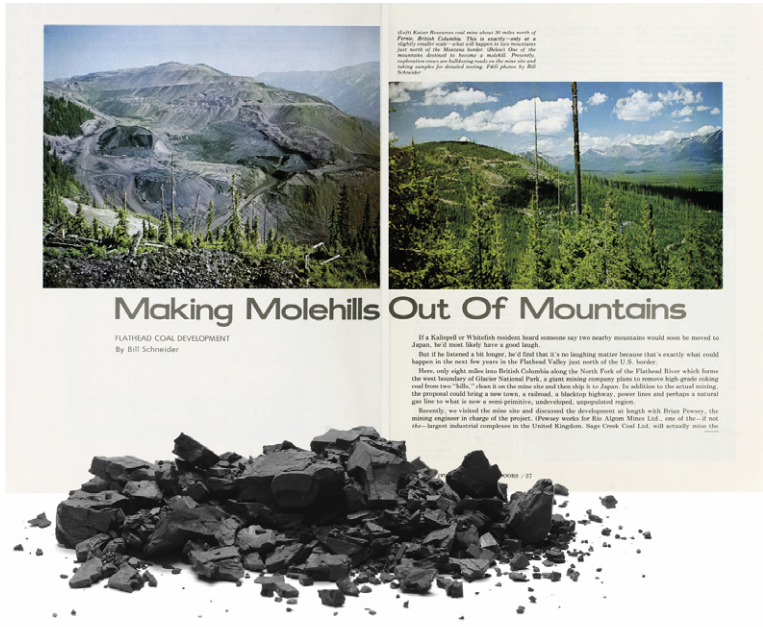


Top: Recycle symbol on Coke bottle in mid-1970s. "Clearcutting and Wildlife," November-December 1973.

Above: "The Subdividers Are Here!" January-February 1974.

Top: Children protesting toxic contamination of New York's Love Canal during the first Earth Day, 1970.

Above: Fish killed by polluted water.

Above: "Making Molehills out of Mountains," on proposed Flathead region coal development, September-October 1974.

Top: Montana Fish and Game Department biologist Bob Greene releasing a Merriam's wild turkey in the early 1970s.

BLOWBACK

Not surprisingly, that stance raised hackles. Throughout the 1970s, *Montana Outdoors* ran critical letters and editorials submitted by real estate developers, energy companies, and others whose interests the magazine challenged. One who took offense was Irv Drasnin, producer of the controversial 1975 CBS documentary, *The Guns of Autumn*, which the magazine denounced as biased anti-hunting propaganda. In a letter to the editor, Drasnin scolded *Montana Outdoors* in turn for what he viewed as mistruths and distortions in its coverage of his movie.

Throughout the 1970s, agency directors and Fish and Game Commission members stood firm on the agency's position defending hunting and the environment. Commission chair Willis B. Jones wrote: "We would have shunned our duty if we had not used *Montana Outdoors* to express our concern [and] we will continue to defend our fish and wildlife resources with all the methods at our command, including more features in *Montana Outdoors*."

Still, even during the nation's environmental awakening, subscribers wanted more than reports on water diversions and strip mining. *Montana Outdoors* also featured articles on the decline of hunting and fishing access, the need to fund nongame wildlife conservation, and how decades of fire suppression built up thick forest understory that fueled severe wildfires.

As there were few specialty outdoors magazines at the time, *Montana Outdoors*

We're losing our streams!

By Bill Miller and Norm Peterson

Streams in Montana are an important part of our heritage. Most people pay little attention to flowing water unless they actually use it for irrigation, navigation and water-based recreation—or the stream floods and causes people problems.

Indians used streams for transportation and established their villages near them long before the first white man entered Montana. The first settlers also used Montana's streams for transportation. Lewis and Clark followed and mapped many rivers and streams of Montana. Stream bottoms were the first place early prospectors searched for that "lure of the West"—gold. Railroad companies pushing West found that the best and cheapest places to lay track were stream valleys. Railroads were soon followed by highways which also utilized the valley bottoms. People settled on or near rivers because of the land's fertility, availability of water, and easy transportation. Towns sprang up all along Montana's rivers and streams.

With all this development and activity in stream valleys, conflicts between people and the river were inevitable. Usually, the stream or river was altered so it didn't conflict with people's use of the land. Before the days of privately used bulldozers and caterpillars, most stream alterations were done by government organizations—highway departments, counties, the Soil Conservation Service, Forest Service, Corps of Engineers etc. But within the last 20 years, ownership and use of caterpillars and heavy machinery by private individuals for the altering of streams has increased tremendously throughout the U.S.

SIX STREAMS STUDIED

To what extent are Montana streams being altered and by whom? During the summer of 1973, fisheries biologists from the Montana Department of Fish and Game were asked to answer this question. Sections from six streams—Beaver, Lolo and Rock creeks, and the Big Hole, Jefferson and Ruby rivers—were selected as samples from which to estimate the magnitude of present-day alterations. (See Fig. 1.) These representative streams were chosen because they are located in different parts of the state, they vary in size and each is (or was) a good trout producing stream.

For this study, "altered" means physically changed by man with a bulldozer or some other form of construction equipment.

In 160 miles of stream studied, 24 miles—approximately one-sixth of the channel—were altered with the dragline or bulldozer. Forty-four miles of streambank were lined with streambed gravel pushed up from

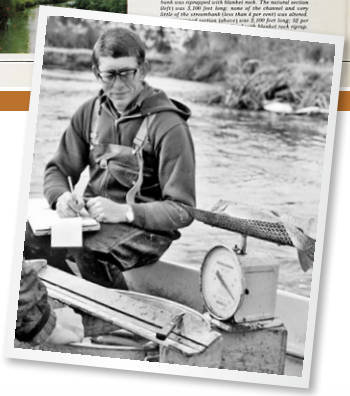
Trout populations in three adjacent sections of the Ruby River were studied by the Department of Fish and Game in the summer of 1973. Each of the three sections was altered in varying degrees. The bulldozed section (above left) was 5,100 feet long; 80 per cent of the channel was altered, 58 per cent of the streambank was covered with river gravel and 42 per cent was bulldozed. The dragline section (above) was 3,100 feet long; 52 per cent was riprapped with blanket rock. The natural section (left) was 2,100 feet long; none of the channel and very little of the streambank (less than 6 per cent) was altered.

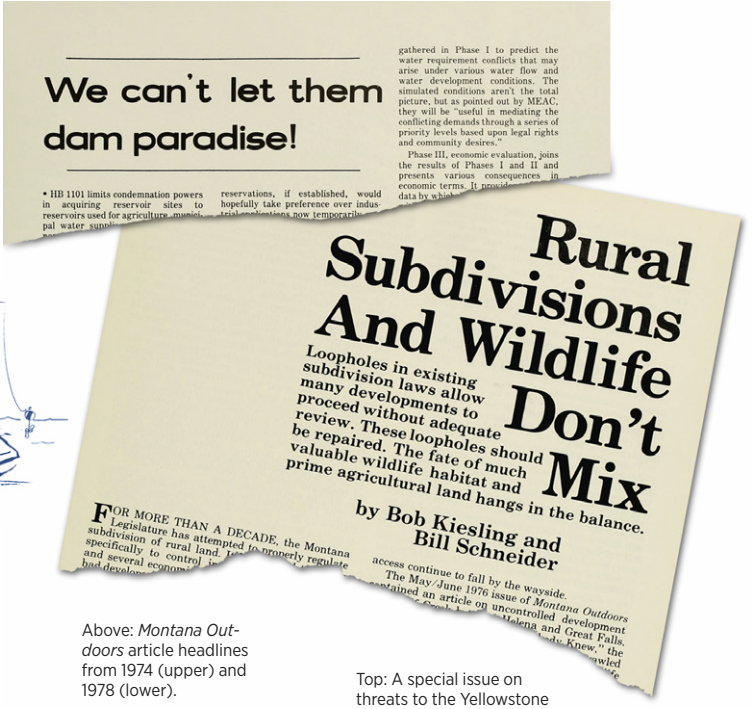
figure 1

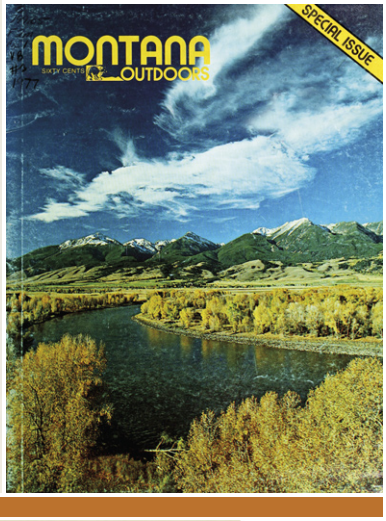
Figure 1 (above-left) shows that total populations of brown trout in the bulldozed and riprapped sections of the six rivers were reduced by 48 and 58 per cent, respectively, from what could be expected had the sections been left in the natural state. Figure 2 shows that decreases in trout numbers in all sizes and age groups can be expected when a stream is bulldozed, channeled or riprapped.

figure 2

January-February 1974 / MONTANA OUTDOORS / 7




We can't let them dam paradise!
Rural Subdivisions And Wildlife Don't Mix
Loopholes in existing subdivision laws allow many developments to proceed without adequate review. These loopholes should be repaired. The fate of much valuable wildlife habitat and prime agricultural land hangs in the balance.
by Bob Kiesling and Bill Schneider



Top: Air pollution protests occurred nationwide in the early 1970s.

Above: "Recycling: Is it Finally Beginning to Work?" July-August 1973.

Top: "We're Losing Our Streams!" January-February 1974.

Middle: Biologist Dick Vincent studying trout in the Madison River, 1971.

Bottom: Illustration by Vern Craig, from "Montana State Fishing Records," July-August 1973.

Above: *Montana Outdoors* article headlines from 1974 (upper) and 1978 (lower).

Top: A special issue on threats to the Yellowstone River by the proposed Allenspur Dam was published in 1977.

regularly featured recreation how-to pieces on winter camping, cross-country skiing, preventing frostbite, and, in one of the decade's most acclaimed features, floating rivers ("Montana's Popular Floating Streams," 1977).

Other popular articles during this period included:

- "The Catchable Trout" 1972), FWP fisheries biologist Dick Vincent's groundbreaking study showing the pitfalls of stocking fish on top of wild populations, research that convinced FWP to switch to wild trout management the following year.
- "Irrigation or Recreation" (1972), a detailed examination of Montana's water law.
- "Hunter Orange" (1972), which explained the new requirement for big game hunters to wear fluorescent orange to reduce hunting accidents.
- "To All the Children of Our Great White Father" (1979), the story of the great Apsáalooke leader, Chief Plenty Coups.
- "Montana Wildlife 170 Years Ago" (1976), which imagined how the state appeared in the early 1800s.

> **"We would have shunned our duty if we had not used *Montana Outdoors* to express our concern..."**

Also, in a special 1977 Yellowstone River issue of *Montana Outdoors* (see cover at top), ecological reports from fisheries and wildlife biologists helped the Fish and Game Department successfully make the legal case for halting construction of the Allenspur Dam, which would have flooded Paradise Valley with a lake the size of Canyon Ferry Reservoir.

"History" continued on page 14.

How *Montana Outdoors* started (and barely survived)

BY BILL SCHNEIDER

August 1969: My first job interview

It all started with my epic interview performance.

I was nearing the end of my last summer on the Glacier Park trail crew. With one semester of college remaining, I became suddenly panicked about how I'd start my real life. I couldn't work on the trail crew forever, even though I relished the idea of getting paid to hike.

So one night around the campfire, I asked my crew boss, Avery Ferguson, if he knew of anybody in my chosen line of work—wildlife biology and journalism—who might hire me. Avery suggested I write Dick Munro, chief of Information and Education at the Montana Department of Fish and Game. That weekend, I sent him a letter, misspelling his name, "Monroe."

Much to my surprise, Dick called me and asked me to stop in Helena on my way back to South Dakota to finish college. Wow, I thought, my first job interview. Dick didn't seem to care that, as an aspiring journalist, I'd misspelled his name. Better to be lucky than good, eh?

Two weeks later, I drove into Helena, totally lost, somehow ending up at the Placer Hotel. I found a pay phone and called Dick. He drove down to meet me, and I followed him back to the Mitchell Building, where the department had its offices.

I nervously braced myself for the interview, but the first thing Dick did was show me a walk-in-closet–sized room and say, "This will be your office." Then he told me about the magazine he wanted to start, and that editing it would be my job.

That was it: my first, last, and only "job interview." And I nailed it.

Four decades later, after both of us had retired, I ran into Dick at a coffee shop. "Dick," I said, "I just need to ask. Why did you hire me?"

He laughed and said he'd called Avery and asked him about me. Avery told Dick that he didn't know anything about me except that I was good with a chain saw and the hardest working guy on the trail crew. "I knew I'd need a hard-working guy," Dick answered.

Yes, I worked hard, always have. But I was just 21 and knew close to nothing about publishing a magazine. Go figure.

PHOTO COURTESY OF BILL SCHNEIDER

On the North Fork of the Flathead River in 1970, when bull trout harvest there was still legal.

January 1970: My first real job

Several months later, days after turning 22 and graduating from South Dakota State University, I walked back into the Mitchell Building to report for my first day on the job. To my chagrin, I didn't have much to do at first because my bosses were too busy to give me enough work. That was tough on a natural-born workaholic. I produced a few brochures, wrote some press releases, and chatted with other employees.

Then came the day Dick told me to get busy starting the magazine. It was July, and he wanted the first issue out by the end of the year, which was another way of saying before the 1971 Montana legislative session. Oblivious to the political ramifications, I focused on the enormous job ahead of me.

I went to the library and checked out and read every book I could find on magazine publishing and editing. There wasn't much there, so I visited printers and asked about producing magazines. I ended up learning enough, barely, to get the inaugural November-December 1970 issue of *Montana Outdoors* published before the Montana Legislature rolled into town.

I logged long hours for months, narrowly staying on a first-name basis with my new

I ended up learning enough, barely, to get the inaugural November-December 1970 issue of *Montana Outdoors* published before the Montana Legislature rolled into town.

bride (who has stuck with me all these years). On my spiffy new IBM Selectric typewriter, I wrote articles, copyedited and wrote headlines and captions for others, and proofread them all. Oh yes, I also did layout for each issue. Those first issues pale in comparison to the world-class design and production of *Montana Outdoors* that readers now enjoy, but they were a starting point.

Dick showed our first issue to the Fish and Game Commission and Montana legislators to illustrate the wonderful job the department was doing to communicate with hunters and anglers. I guess it worked, politically and otherwise, because over the past 50 years, *Montana Outdoors* has blossomed into one of the best state conservation magazines in the country—actually, the best, according to some judges. I take no credit for the vast improvements that subsequent editors have made. Then again, they couldn't have improved it if it hadn't been there to improve, right?

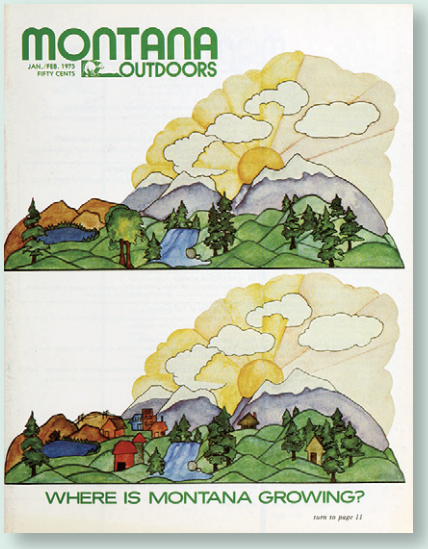
January 1976: Early death narrowly averted

Unknown to most of the magazine's current subscribers, *Montana Outdoors* almost disappeared in the late 1970s.

Those were the Golden Years for Montana environmentalists. Montana passed a new constitution with the right to a clean environment forever guaranteed, along with many of the state's major pro-environmental laws. But such progress didn't happen without controversy.

Back then, the department had more political independence than other state agencies and was in a serious fighting mood when it came to protecting fish and wildlife habitat. *Montana Outdoors* became a major messenger for the department's efforts.

In those days, the governor appointed Fish and Game Commission members, usually from a list of candidates submitted by rod and gun clubs. Then, every four years when a new administration took over, the commission hired the new director. Only the commission, not the governor, could fire the director, and only for cause. That changed in the 1970s as part of an executive reorganization that allowed the governor to appoint both commission members and the agency director, who could also be fired by the governor. From that point on, the agency became far less independent in its ability to tackle politically challenging land-use issues.



"Back then, the department had more political independence than other state agencies and was in a serious fighting mood when it came to protecting fish and wildlife habitat."

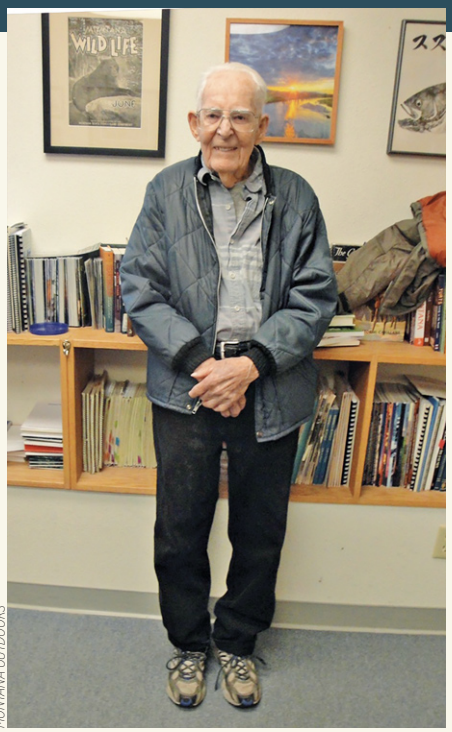
In the early and mid-'70s, I busied myself publishing numerous hard-hitting articles on controversial subjects such as rural subdivision, coal development, power line routing, weed control, trout stream dewatering, off-road vehicle use, clear-cutting, and wilderness designation, stepping on a lot of political toes along the way. Some prominent legislators took exception to the department's strong pro-environmental stances and proposed eliminating the magazine and sacking the editor.

Thankfully, conservation groups statewide rallied to support the magazine. When the dust settled, the effort to scuttle *Montana Outdoors* had failed and the editor still had his first real job, though the publication's editorial spear had been forever dulled.

Today: How sweet it is

I left the department in February 1980—to become a capitalist! Dave Books had taken over my job a few years earlier and edited the magazine until retiring in December 2001, when the current editor, Tom Dickson, took the helm. Today, in the cyber world we live in, I read only one print magazine, *Montana Outdoors*. As I flip the pages, I swell with pride. I am honored to be part of the team that has worked diligently for five decades to give Montana anglers, hunters, parks visitors, hikers, and others who love the outdoors the best state conservation magazine ever. ■

EDITOR'S NOTE: Bill Schneider left Montana Outdoors *in 1978 to start a new publication,* Falcon Magazine for Kids, *which later became* Wild Outdoor World *(W.O.W.) In 1980 he co-founded Helena-based Falcon Publishing, which in 2000 became part of Connecticut-based Globe Pequot Press and for the past 40 years has produced more than 1,000 hiking, camping, mountain biking, and other FalconGuides. In 1979 Schneider wrote* Hiking Montana, *one of the most popular backcountry books ever printed, now in its 10th edition. "My philosophy has always been that if you want people to protect wilderness, they have to value it. And the way they value it is to see it for themselves, on foot," Schneider says. He has also written 20 other hiking, backpacking, and bear and bear awareness guides, and from 2005 to 2011 wrote the popular "Wild Bill" column for NewWest.Net, an online publication that was based in Missoula.*



MONTANA OUTDOORS

Our hero!

One of the most talented and admirable people to work at *Montana Outdoors* was Vern Craig.

Vern grew up on a small ranch near Harrison. After serving in WWII, where he earned three bronze stars as a B-52 gunner, he attended Montana State University and earned a bachelor's degree in graphic design and a master's degree in wildlife—a rare combination. As was the case with many conservation-minded artists at the time, Vern was influenced by Jay "Ding" Darling, the Pulitzer Prize–winning Iowa editorial cartoonist who parodied slob hunters and unbridled development that destroyed fish and wildlife habitat.

During his 32-year career at FWP, Craig designed and illustrated brochures, edited *Montana Wildlife* in the 1960s, and contributed articles and cartoons to *Montana Outdoors*.

We were honored to meet the good-natured war hero and FWP legend when he stopped by the magazine office to introduce himself in 2012, a few months before his death at age 90.

Predecessor publications

Though *Montana Outdoors* began in the 1970s, its origins stretch back to the 1920s. *The Big Horn*, published jointly by the Montana Fish and Game Commission and the Montana Sportsmen's Association from 1922-27, was the department's first attempt at sharing information with the public.

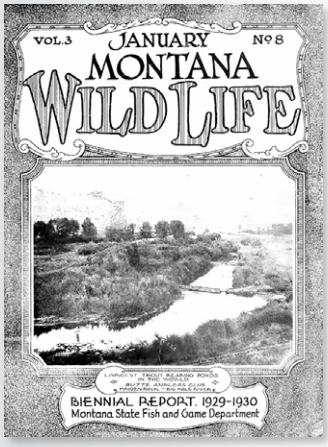
The department then published its own quarterly magazine, *Montana Wild Life**, from 1928-33. Like wildlife agencies across the country, the Montana Department of Fish and Game wanted to provide hunters and anglers with harvest data and scientific reports on fish and wildlife populations and behavior. *Montana Wild Life* was "published to disseminate authoritative information regarding activities of the department," editor Floyd L. Smith wrote in the first issue. "Its purpose is to present the facts, secure in the knowledge that authentic statistics have an educational value appreciated by [people] who love the out-of-doors."

Montana Wild Life was discontinued due to budget cuts during the Great Depression and was replaced in 1936 with the monthly *Fish and Game Notes* (see page 10). After that mimeographed publication was discontinued in 1937, the department went without a magazine until 1951, when it started a new quarterly publication called *Sporting Montana*, changing the name to *Montana Wildlife* the following year.

Meanwhile, beginning in 1966, the department began issuing a monthly newsletter called *Montana Outdoors*. It and *Montana Wildlife* were combined in late 1970 to become the magazine that for the next 50 years has helped readers understand what the department is doing and why that work matters.

*Like many other words in the English language, including "lifestyle" and "bighorn," "wildlife" first appeared as two separate words. Grammatically, this is known as an open compound word, which over time often joins to become one word, known as a closed compound word.

The Big Horn
1922-1927



Montana Wild Life
1928-1933

Sporting Montana
1951

Montana Wildlife
1952-1970

Grizzlies and *Montana Outdoors*

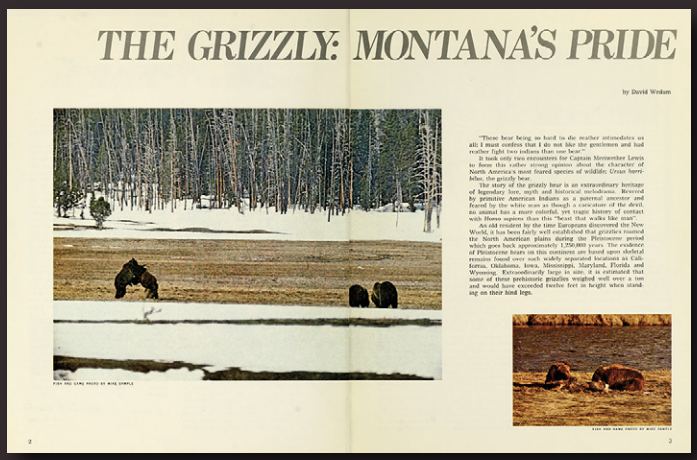
The first issue of *Montana Outdoors* featured a grizzly bear on its cover (see page 2 of this issue). The title story was "The Grizzly: Montana's Pride" (at left), by Choteau-based game warden and bear expert Dave Wedum.

At the time, grizzly bear hunting was still legal in Montana. Hunting seasons continued until 1991, when environmental groups convinced federal courts to halt the season because the state lacked data proving hunting was not harming the population.

Montana Outdoors covered those events as well as the grizzly population's subsequent growth and spread in the two ecosystems surrounding Glacier and Yellowstone National Parks.

Later articles focused on encounters with the "great white bear" by Lewis and Clark, scientists' efforts to count grizzlies in the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem, and FWP bear management specialists' work to reduce bear problems for orchard, beehive, and livestock owners.

Over the years, *Montana Outdoors* has run more articles on Montana's official state mammal—covering grizzly bear biology and research, conflicts with humans, pepper spray effectiveness, garbage management, and federal oversight—than any other species. ■



"The Grizzly: Montana's Pride," November-December 1970

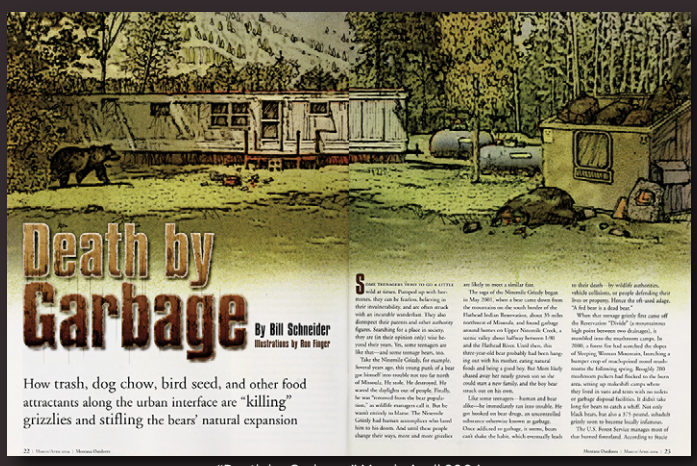
This **1972 article** made a case in favor of maintaining Montana's increasingly controversial grizzly bear hunting seasons. "Very likely, the reason grizzlies are tolerated in wild areas is because they are hunted. Hunting keeps them wary of mankind," the article argued. That same case is still made today by some of those advocating for a return of state authority over grizzlies in Montana and a renewal of regulated hunting seasons.

HUNTING THE GRIZZLY
THE COVER STORY
ARE PRESENT HUNTING REGULATIONS FORCING NORTH AMERICA'S MOST FEARED SPECIES OF WILDLIFE INTO EXTINCTION?
BY BILL SCHNEIDER

"Hunting the Grizzly," November-December 1972

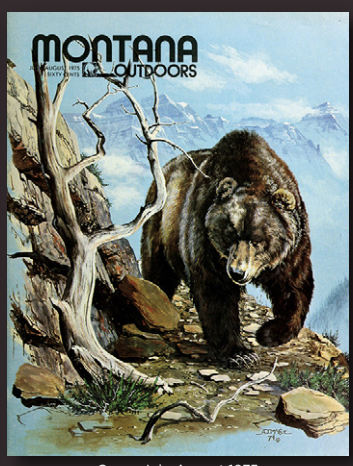
"Montana's Rare Ones," March-April 1988

"Meet the Awesome White Bear," Sept.-Oct. 1976


Death by Garbage
By Bill Schneider
Illustrations by Ron Finger
How trash, dog chow, bird seed, and other food attractants along the urban interface are "killing" grizzlies and stifling the bears' natural expansion

"Death by Garbage," March-April 2004

"Grizzly Bear: The Animal, the Symbol, the Enigma," May-June 1982



Cover, July-August 1975

SPECIAL REPORT
Overdue
State and federal agencies say it's time to take Yellowstone region grizzly bears off the threatened species list.
By Tom Dickson

"Overdue," November-December 2016

"The Grizzly," July-August 1975

OPERATION GRIZZLY
A monitoring project of military proportions produces an elusive population number and other critical information on northwestern Montana bears.
BY TOM DICKSON
Canada
United States
Montana
Idaho
Wyoming
Yellowstone National Park
Glacier National Park
Missoula
Kalispell
Bozeman
Helena
Butte
Great Falls
Billings
Havre
Miles City
Glacier/Waterton Ecosystem
Yellowstone Ecosystem
Grizzly bears represent the average location of each bear sampled in the survey.
GENETIC SEPARATION: The grizzly study turned up six genetic subpopulations in the NCDE. Though many bears move among subpopulations, breeding occurs mainly with in subpopulations, according to project leader Kate Kendall. Grizzlies in the subpopulation along the Rocky Mountain Front (green dots) are the most genetically distinct. They feed on abundant wintertime cattle and wildlife and tend to be larger than those in other subpopulations, Kendall says. Another finding was that the western portion of U.S. Highway 2, where human density is higher, is beginning to form a barrier to genetic mixing. "With less-frequent corridor more garbage and other attractants that draw bears, which often leads to lethal removal before the bears can reproduce," says Kendall. "Roads aren't the barrier as much as the associated development."
BIG, YES, BUT GROWING? Scientists now know the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem grizzly population is more than twice previous estimates, is it increasing and thus ready for the first delisting? Biologists will need several more years to find out.

"Operation Grizzly," March-April 2009

SPECIAL REPORT
STATE OF THE GRIZZLY
Now that the Yellowstone bears have been delisted, what's in store for Montana's other grizzly populations?
BY CHRISTINE PAIGE
WATCH THE BEARS RUB TREES
WILDERNESS ICON: Montanans, who have long admired the grizzly as a symbol of the state's wild heritage, began protecting the species from unregulated hunting in 1923. Due to abundant habitat on public and private land, grizzly populations are increasing in large parts of western Montana. Each year more grizzlies end up in culvert traps (right), to be radiocollared and released for observation.

"State of the Grizzly," March-April 2008

This **2009 article** told the story of how 400-plus volunteers collectively drove 300,000 miles and hiked 18,000 miles in the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem in and south of Glacier National Park to collect grizzly bear hair samples. By studying DNA in the hairs, scientists for the first time were able to accurately estimate the ecosystem's population size: 765. Later articles noted that the population has grown to over 1,000.

MANAGING THE GRIZZLY BEAR
by Robert D. Brannon, Richard David Mace, and Arnold Dood
illustrated by Lee Cable
A recently completed environmental impact statement offers some new ideas for balancing grizzly bear conservation with human needs in the northern Rockies.

"Managing the Grizzly Bear," May-June 1986

"The Beast That Walks Like Man," 1980 Special Issue

PERSPECTIVES
The Dairy Queen Bear
by Roland Cheek
They call him the "Dairy Queen Bear." A charismatic name is appropriate for a charismatic bear.

"The Dairy Queen Bear," March-April 1998

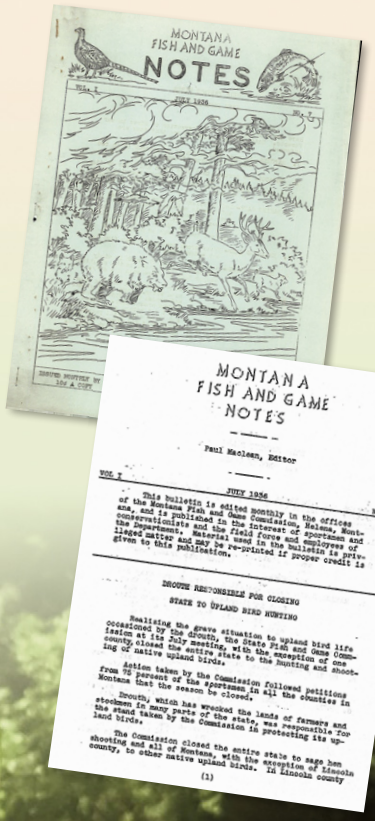
Paul D. Maclean

A typewriter ribbon ran through it

After discontinuing *Montana Wild Life* in 1933, the department still needed to provide the public with information on agency issues and activities. For two years, 1936-37, it produced *Montana Fish and Game Notes*, a monthly booklet of mimeographed typewritten pages stapled together. The editor was Paul Maclean, younger brother of Norman Maclean, author of *A River Runs Through It*, both of whom grew up in Missoula. The younger Maclean was also a reporter for the *Helena Independent Record*.

An avid outdoorsman—played by Brad Pitt in the 1992 movie version of *A River Runs Through It*—Paul wrote news reports and editorials for the humble Fish and Game Department publication. "Montana's fish and game are too valuable to sportsmen and to the State as a whole that laws protecting such invaluable resources should [not] be treated lightly," he wrote in a 1936 editorial denouncing local courts' leniency when dealing with poachers.

In 1937 Paul moved to Illinois to work as a publicity writer for the University of Chicago, where his brother taught English. In 1938 he died in Chicago from injuries after being assaulted, for reasons that remain a mystery. He was 32. ■


MONTANA FISH AND GAME NOTES

Paul Maclean, Editor

VOL 2 JULY 1936 NO. 7

This bulletin is edited monthly in the offices of the Montana Fish and Game Commission, Helena, Montana, and is published in the interest of sportsmen and conservationists and the fish and game department. Material used in the bulletins of the department may be re-printed if proper credit is given to this publication.

BROOME RESPONSIBLE FOR CLOSING STATE TO UPLAND BIRD HUNTING

Realizing the grave situation to upland bird life occasioned by the drouth, the State Fish and Game Commission at its July meeting, with the exception of one county, closed the entire state to the hunting and shooting of native upland birds.

Action taken by the Commission followed petitions from 75 percent of the sportsmen in all the counties in Montana that the season be closed.

Drouth, which has wrecked the lands of farmers and stockmen in many parts of the state, was responsible for the stand taken by the Commission in protecting its upland birds.

The Commission closed the entire state to sage hen shooting and all of Montana, with the exception of Lincoln county, to other native upland birds. In Lincoln county

(1)

A tad late

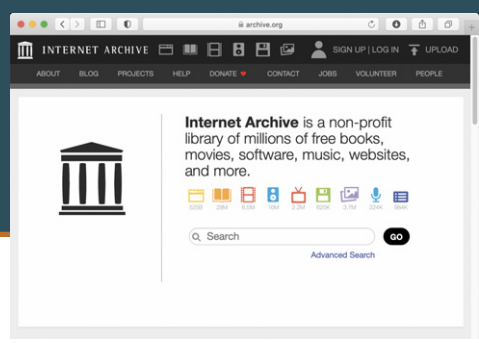
The first issue of *Montana Outdoors* (Vol. 1, No. 1) was November-December 1970, making the November-December 2020 issue the true 50th anniversary edition. Production complications caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and the need to publish the popular 2021 photo issue delayed this golden anniversary edition by a few months.

Where to find these articles

Readers looking for stories mentioned in this special edition of *Montana Outdoors* can find them, with some effort, online. Using a grant from the Montana Legislature, the Montana State Library has scanned every issue of *Montana Outdoors* and its predecessor publications dating back to 1928. The issues have been uploaded to **archive.org**, the digital world repository of printed and electronic books and other media.

In the search box at archive.org, enter "Montana Outdoors" and the year you want (for instance, "Montana Outdoors 1986"). Don't include the month, or it won't work. The site will then show the six issues from that year, and you can go to the issue you want, open its table of contents, and find the article.

In addition, by the end of 2021, all issues since 2002 will be available on the FWP website, with more to follow.



They say letter writing is a lost art, but not for Montana Outdoors' many opinionated readers. Here is a sample of the thousands of letters (and emails) we've received over the years.

Thumbs Up

March-April 1971
I hope you will convey my profound congratulations to editor Bill Schneider and his staff on the beauty and quality of the latest publication....It makes a person proud to be a Montanan when he sees such a wonderful product.
J. Campbell, KYSS Radio, Missoula

November-December 1975
After two issues of your magazine, I can say that I am very impressed with the content and philosophy. The editors and staff seem to realize that hunting and conservation can and should go hand in hand.
M. Ruhkala, St. Ignatius

September-October 1982
It makes me feel guilty to get such a fine magazine for that price. But it's best not to look a gift horse in the mouth. Three years, please!
J. Finley, Arlee

March-April 1990
The most rewarding tasks require patience and deftness few of us possess. Such talent is reserved for people such as your camera professionals whose work adorns your remarkable special photo issue of *Montana Outdoors*.
S. Stephens, Governor, State of Montana, Helena

November-December 2003
We are very pleased with the magazine's new look and content. We especially appreciate that both sides of an issue are presented, whether it's from a rancher or recreationist, politician or citizen, industry representative or wilderness advocate.
L. and C. Eisenman, Missoula

March-April 2008
As always, your magazine is excellent. Exceptional writing: informative, objective, and insightful.
L. Selvey III, Billings

March-April 2019
There's so much to admire about the November-December issue that I just had to write and say thank you....*Montana Outdoors* speaks volumes about FWP's commitment to important, accountable, and results-oriented public service.
J. Holbrook, Missoula

Thumbs Down

March-April 1976
...We get tired of the environmentalists' articles on the loss of game habitat and the encroachment of people on game...
C. Green, Coram

March-April 1980
I do not wish to renew my subscription because I do not feel your magazine has been properly objective in reporting news concerning wilderness and land withdrawals. I work for a sawmill and feel very strongly that there is enough wilderness in Montana at present.
M. Lyngholm, Dillon

March-April 1992
Regarding your recent photo issue: Please do not forget the other two-thirds of our state, unless you are willing to change the name of the magazine to *Western Montana Outdoors*.
L. Lee, Shelby

November-December 1998
I would like to see some articles on the predator issue. It seems to me your magazine sidesteps and if anything takes too much of the "Disney" approach on many of the important issues facing Montana.
R. Coulter, Brusett

May-June 2009
Your article on bowhunting uses selectively chosen data to support a false perception of archery elk hunting in the Missouri River Breaks...
M. Robbins, Armells Creek Outfitters, Roy

May-June 2010
I just read your article on wolves and am sorely disappointed. It would have been appropriate to mention wolves eliminating our huntable surplus of game, such as the 90 percent reduction in elk numbers in the Taylor's Fork...
J. Daar, Livingston

November-December 2010
As I sat down this evening to look through your September-October issue I was completely saddened, even disgusted, to find that the entire magazine, with the exception of a couple of pages, is focused on blasting some animal to death.
E. Malphrus, McAllister

July-August 2018
I can't believe you published that factless and fiction-filled letter with fake data about raptor lead poisoning in the May-June issue. What stoked my ire even more was the editor's tepid, almost apologetic, response.
A. Harmata, Bozeman

Error Message

March-April 1982
I am probably not the first to point out what I presume is a boo-boo in your November-December 1981 issue. The quotation "Conservation is a state of harmony between men and land...." is attributed to William A. Breyfogle [but] the words come from the most quoted conservationist of our day, Aldo Leopold.
C. Bradley, Leopold Memorial Reserve, Baraboo, WI

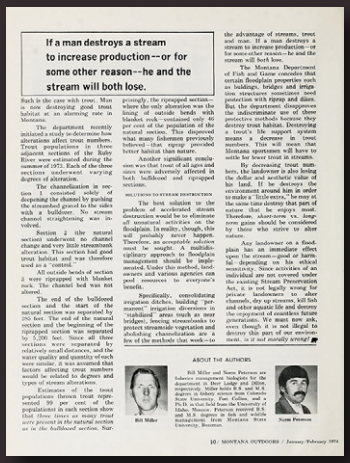
May-June 1984
The beautiful picture on the back cover of the January-February 1984 issue is of a butterfly, not a moth. It appears to be a member of the subfamily Plebeiinae, commonly known as the Blues.
K. DuBois, Choteau

July-August 1987
The photo on page 19 of your March-April 1987 is of a Ross's goose (*Chen rossii*) not a snow goose (*Chen caerulescens*).
W. Jacobson, Kalispell

November-December 2008
On page 14 of your last issue, you show a picture of a bird labeled "spruce grouse." If I'm not mistaken, the bare red patch shows that it is actually a blue grouse (now called a dusky grouse).
J. Gunderson, Billings

May-June 2011
I have admired your magazine for many years but must point out two factual geological errors in the March-April issue...
M. Garverich, Bozeman

March-April 2014
You reported that the number of bird species in Montana is 294. The number is in fact 429, based on the Montana Bird Records Committee.
R. Wolcott, Sacajawea Audubon, Bozeman



"We're Losing Our Streams!" January-February 1974

"Elk Under the Wire," March-April 1987

FWP Staff and *Montana Outdoors*

One of *Montana Outdoors*' most important roles is to spotlight the work of department field staff. Biologists, technicians, park managers, game wardens, hatchery crews, and others from the farthest corners of the state have been featured in articles that explain what FWP does and why.

In the magazine's early years, FWP biologists and program managers carved out time from other duties to write many articles themselves. Later, articles were produced by agency information specialists and professional writers who covered the most important and interesting activities conducted by crews across Montana.

The exposure adds to the department's transparency, showing readers exactly what FWP teams are accomplishing with hunting and fishing license dollars and state park fees and why that work is important.

The publicity is also gratifying to employees. Having their work highlighted in *Montana Outdoors* provides statewide and national recognition for their role in stewarding Montana's state parks, wildlife, and fisheries. These stories are a way of bringing attention to important projects, from pallid sturgeon studies in the lower Yellowstone River to fisher population monitoring in the Bitterroot Mountains. ■

Much of FWP's most important work is done *indoors*. This **2017 article** showed readers the inner workings of the department's License Bureau. It documented the process of randomly selecting names in the agency's computer drawings for coveted moose, bighorn sheep, and mountain goat hunting licenses. "Hunters need to have faith that it's fair," said an FWP official about the department's lottery system.

The Big Day
Behind the scenes at FWP's annual lottery drawing for moose, bighorn sheep, and mountain goat hunting licenses
By Tom Dickson
Photos by Nicole Keintz
Just before 7 a.m., on June 13, in the basement of the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks headquarters in Helena, Marsha Ogle is waiting to begin the lottery drawings for Montana's 2016 moose, bighorn sheep, and mountain goat hunting licenses.
"Go ahead," says Neal Whitney, her supervisor.

"The Big Day," May-June 2017

SPECIAL REPORT
"We have this 'cowboy up' mentality, where we just suck it up and carry on. That means our guests never see all the stress and unpaid work going on behind the scenes."
—Amy Grout, Flathead Lake State Parks Manager

"Behind the Curtain," March-April 2019

"FWP at Work," March-April 2016

"Hatchery Pride," May-June 2006

"FWP at Work," September-October 2018

"Keeping Forests Forested," March-April 2016

"From Banning TNT to Scanning DNA," May-June 2017

"Commitment to Excellence," July-August 1985

IN FINE WORKING ORDER
It takes expertise, money, innovation, and a stubborn sense of thrift to keep Montana's 50 state parks and 320 fishing access sites clean, safe, and functional.
By Will Harmon
Photos by FWP Parks Division

"In Fine Working Order," March-April 2007

"Bitterroot Elk Mystery," Nov.-Dec. 2014

"FWP at Work," May-June 2019

GAME WARDENS IN ACTION
Affable Authority
FWP game wardens mean business. But with a nod and a smile.
STORY AND PHOTOS BY ALLEN MORRIS JONES

"Affable Authority," September-October 2015

"FWP at Work," September-October 2012

"FWP at Work" shines a spotlight on the agency's unsung heroes like network systems analysts, maintenance workers, administrative staff, and employees working in remote areas of the state.

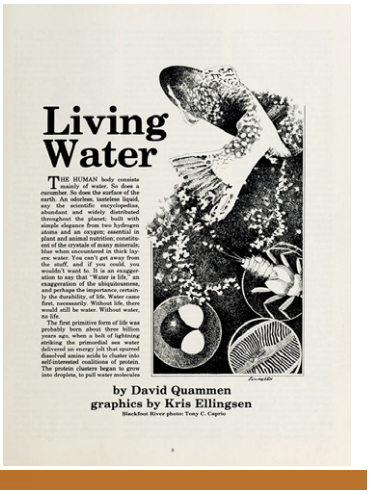
Wildlife Management
Demystified
BY SAM CURTIS
A guide to how FWP conserves Montana's wildlife species and their habitats

"Wildlife Management Demystified," September-October 2003

"Raceways to the Rescue," May-June 2016

HERE IT IS
Small signs help hunters, other recreationists, and landowners by showing exactly where state and federal parcels begin and end.
STORY AND PHOTOS BY TOM DICKSON
"He'd stop and shoot the breeze, and we kind of developed a relationship. By the third day he was helping me out."

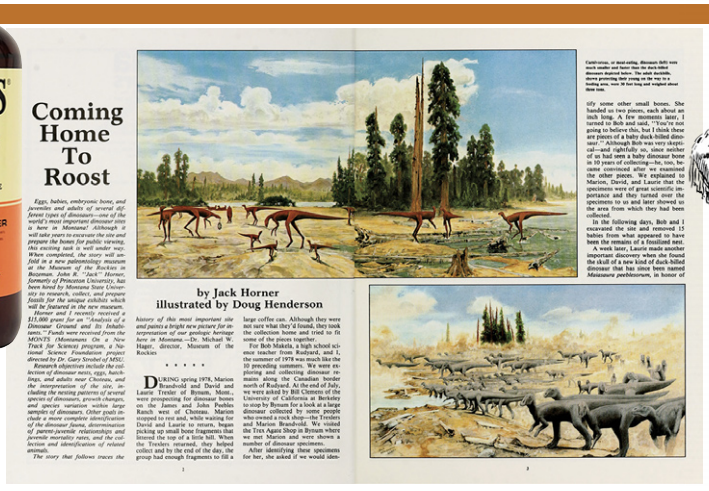
"Here It Is," July-August 2010



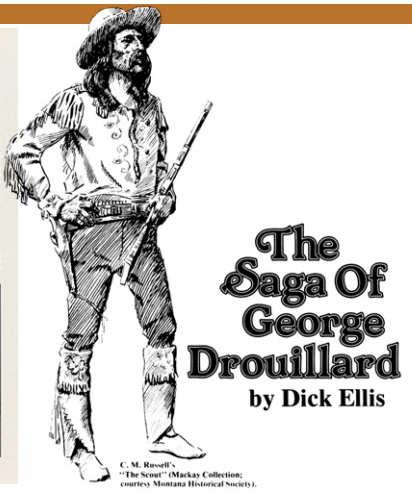
Top: September-October 1978, the first issue under new editor Dave Books.

Above: Skunks and artwork are featured in "The Least Bothered Animal on Earth," September-October 1978.

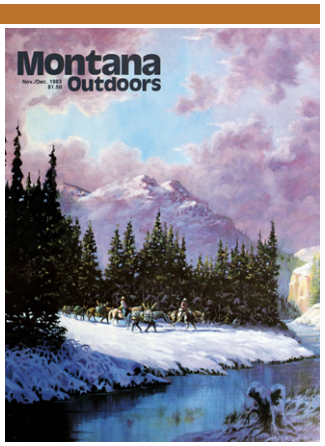
Above: "Living Water," stream ecology essay by noted writer David Quammen, May-June 1981.



Above: "Coming Home to Roost," groundbreaking dinosaur research, July-August 1982.



Above: C.M. Russell's "The Scout," illustration featured in "The Saga Of George Drouillard," July-August 1980.



Above: November-December 1982.

"History" continued from page 4.

THE MAGAZINE MELLOWS

By the end of the 1970s, many of the environmental changes advocated by *Montana Outdoors* were underway. Congress had passed the Endangered Species, Clean Water, and Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Acts. In the Treasure State, the 1972 Montana Constitution included a provision guaranteeing Montanans a "clean and healthful environment." The state legislature passed laws like the 1973 Montana Water Use Act to balance growing natural resource development—essential for the state's economic growth—with protecting land, water, wildlife, and other public trust resources.

Yet much work remained to safeguard fish and wildlife populations and habitat, and *Montana Outdoors* continued to promote that stewardship, though with a different attitude. After Schneider moved to another position in the department, the magazine focused more on highlighting the state's natural beauty and the personal satisfaction that comes from hunting, fishing, camping, hiking, and other outdoors pursuits.

The new editor embodied this quieter approach. Dave Books's first editorial, on the upcoming upland bird season, set the magazine's tone for the next quarter century:

> **"Grouse fever strikes but once a year."**

"As the new editor of *Montana Outdoors*, I suppose I might have used this space to discuss weightier matters than grouse and grouse hunting. Threats to wildlife habitat continue to accelerate, and no doubt they will occupy a good deal of my editorial attention as time goes on. But this is September, and if I seem preoccupied with frosty mornings, autumn colors, bird dogs, and the smell of Hoppe's No. 9, bear with me a little longer. Grouse fever strikes but once a year."

As the agency began paying more attention to state parks in the 1980s, so too did *Montana Outdoors*. Responsibility for the popular historical, cultural, and recreational sites had been transferred to the department in 1965, but not until 1979 did it change its name to Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks. It was time to give the state's popular parks their due.

Meanwhile, improved magazine printing technology gave readers more images of Montana's outdoor life in full color. In 1981 the magazine published a special photography issue showcasing the state's wildlife and scenic beauty.

"History" continued on page 17.

Easing up on the accelerator

BY DAVE BOOKS

I arrived as the new editor of *Montana Outdoors* in the spring of 1978 at age 34. I had been editor of a quarterly natural resource journal in my previous job at the University of Montana, but I knew that editing a full-color, bimonthly magazine with a much larger circulation would pose a greater challenge. Previous editor Bill Schneider had already moved on to a new assignment in the department, but fortunately for me associate editor Kay Ellerhoff and art director Donita Sexton had been with *Montana Outdoors* for several years and were there to show me the ropes, share a laugh, and sometimes celebrate with a beer after another issue had been put to bed.

I quickly learned there were a great many writers, photographers, and artists both in the FWP family and around Montana who believed in the magazine and what we were doing. I'll always be grateful to them for their willingness to share their knowledge and talent with our readers. Speaking of our readers, they were a disparate but dedicated bunch, living both in Montana and in other states, with a variety of interests and viewpoints but with one thing in common: They loved Montana with a passion, especially its wildlife, fisheries, mountains, rivers, prairies, and state parks. I know that still holds true today.

Too (or insufficiently) "preachy"?

I would be lying if I didn't admit there were a few pitfalls and embarrassing moments along the way. Not long after I took over, we ran a photo essay featuring spring wildflowers along with quotes from essayists like John Muir and Walt Whitman. For some reason I didn't think it necessary to identify the flowers; I guess I thought our readers would be so smitten by the beautiful images and words that naming the flowers wouldn't be necessary.

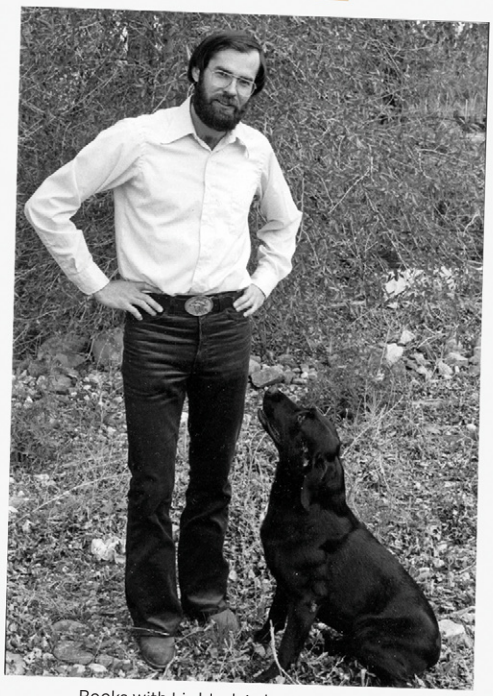


PHOTO COURTESY OF DAVE BOOKS

Books with his black Lab, Bullet, in 1978.

It was an important lesson that I tried always to remember: entertain, yes, but don't forget to educate.

Wrong. Numerous readers fired back with guns blazing, letting me know they weren't subscribing to the magazine just for pretty pictures; they wanted to learn about the natural wonders of Montana. We published a *mea culpa* in the next issue and identified those flowers, including the genus and species. It was an important lesson that I tried always to remember: entertain, yes, but don't forget to educate.

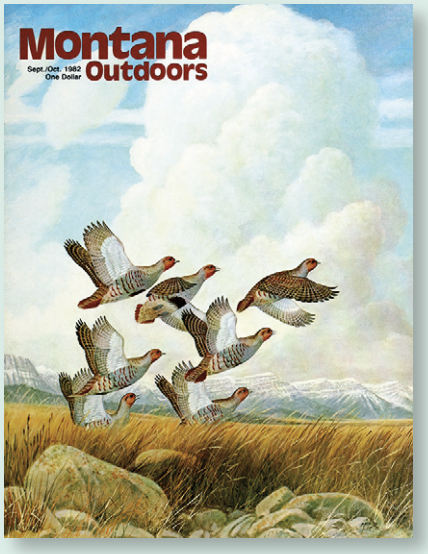
The environmental awakening that swept the nation in the 1970s made for contentious times, both for the department and for *Montana Outdoors*. We believed that articles on topics like energy development, dam building, water rights, pipelines, habitat destruction, pollution, and subdivisions were important, so we ran them. But they weren't always greeted with universal acclaim.

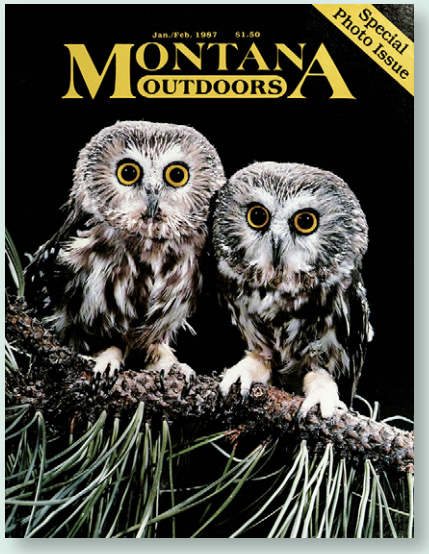
Some readers complained we were too "preachy," while others thought we weren't hard-hitting enough. I remember getting letters expressing opposite points of view that often left me scratching my head. And as Bill Schneider mentioned earlier, a few people even wanted to see *Montana Outdoors* shut down for good.

To address hot issues, the agency formed an advisory board consisting mainly of division administrators and magazine staff. For several years we deliberated at length about issues confronting the department and the magazine's role in bringing them to the fore. Our goal was then, as I believe it remains to this day, to report on controversial topics objectively and factually so that readers can

weigh the evidence and draw their own conclusions.

By the mid-1980s and into the 1990s, many of the environmental problems we had grappled with had been resolved or at least improved through legislation, and the political climate in the state had become less heated. Much to my relief as editor, the advisory board was no longer deemed necessary, but it had played an important role in laying out the principles of fairness to which the magazine would always try to adhere. I'm happy to see that, after a half century in print, *Montana Outdoors* is still very much in business, still growing and still thriving.





Massive changes

Magazine publishing changed in myriad ways during my 24 years as editor. In terms of technology it was like going from a horse and buggy to driving a Formula One race car in a few short decades. Computers not only saved a lot of time but also enhanced our ability to work creatively with graphics and photos in the layout process. Over time the printing industry, too, made great strides in the quality of color printing, rendering wildlife images so crisp that birds, animals, and fish almost seemed to leap off the pages.

I look back on my quarter century at *Montana Outdoors* as a special time in my life. I will always be indebted to the hundreds of people, both inside the department and out, who helped make the magazine a success. Most of all, I am grateful to the readers for every letter, phone call, and encouraging word I received.

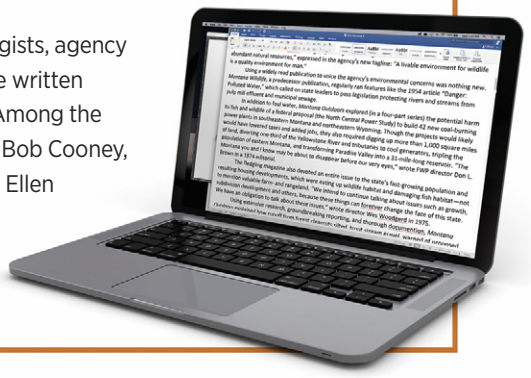
I will always be indebted to the hundreds of people, both inside the department and out, who helped make the magazine a success.

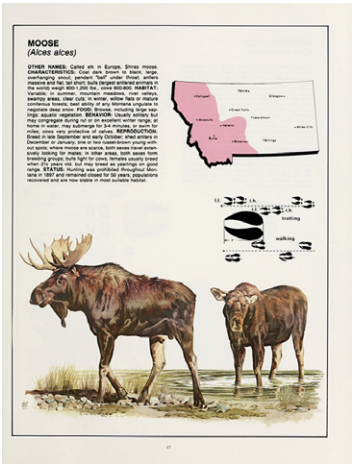
During most of my tenure I was lucky to have Ron Aasheim, longtime leader of what is now called the Communication-Education Division, as my boss. He was a constant source of encouragement and support. Not long before I retired, Ron asked me to put together a special issue to help celebrate the department's centennial year. That November-December 2000 issue, titled "A Century of Conservation," gave me a chance to review in depth the department's history and 100 years of service to Montanans. I will always take pride in having played a small part in that history through my time at *Montana Outdoors*. ■

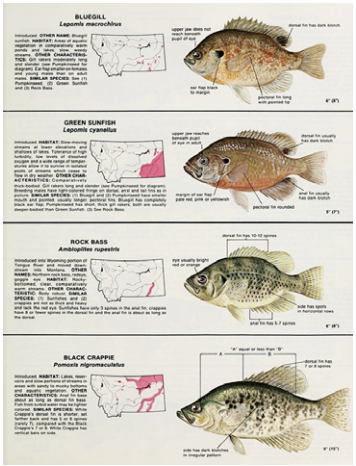
Editor's Note: After retiring from FWP, Dave Books indulged his love of outdoors writing by writing essays and articles for Pheasants Forever, Ducks Unlimited, *and even* Montana Outdoors *when the current editor could talk him into it. He's also the author of* Wingbeats and Heartbeats: Essays on Game Birds, Gun Dogs, and Days Afield, *published by the University of Wisconsin Press.*

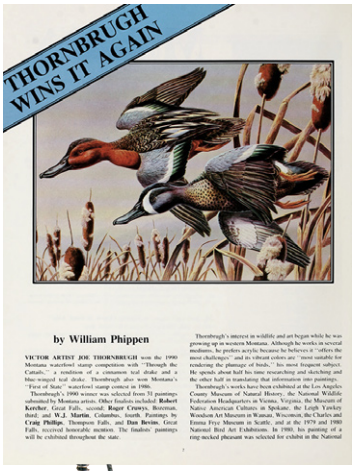
Our essential contributors

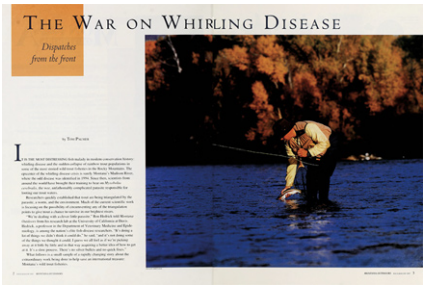
In addition to the magazine's three editors, hundreds of FWP biologists, agency information officers, and writers outside the department have written articles for *Montana Outdoors* over the past five decades. Among the most prolific: Bruce Auchly, Dave Carty, Alan Charles, Bob Cooney, Sam Curtis, Kay Ellerhoff, Dennis Flath, John Fraley, Ellen Horowitz, Becky Lomax, Ben Long, Andrew McKean, Tom Palmer, Bill Phippen, Deborah Richie, Ken Walcheck, Vince Yannone, and Harley Yeager.











Top: "Guide to Big Game Mammals," November-December 1984.

Above: "The War on Whirling Disease," on the dire threat to the Madison River, July-August 1997.

Top: "Guide to Common Game and Sport Fish," May-June 1981.

Above: "Soul Music," March-April 1997, part of the magazine's popular "Perspectives" series.

Top: The new Montana Duck Stamp winner is announced, March-April 1990.

Top: "The Right Place, the Right Time," November-December 1989, on FWP legends Bob Cooney, Rex Smart, and Jim McLucas.

Above: "Sentries in the Clouds," on mountain goats, November-December 1998.

"History," continued from page 14.

The annual "photo issue," which some years included famous quotes and homegrown poetry, became a popular holiday tradition.

The 1980s also marked a new look. Art director Donita Sexton created a new cover logo for the September-October 1984 issue that would identify the publication for the next 18 years. The magazine also commissioned illustrations and wildlife art to accentuate essays and articles. The result was a livelier and more beautiful publication that could compete with state and national magazines for readers' attention.

SPECIAL ISSUES AND SERIES

Readers enjoyed the magazine's series of identification guides that started with Montana's game fish (1981) and went on to highlight upland game birds (1982), big game mammals (1984), birds of prey (1987), owls (1990), furbearing mammals (1992), and amphibians and reptiles (1995). These guides, illustrated with detailed paintings by Montana artists, have been reprinted by the thousands for use in schools and hunter education classes over the years.

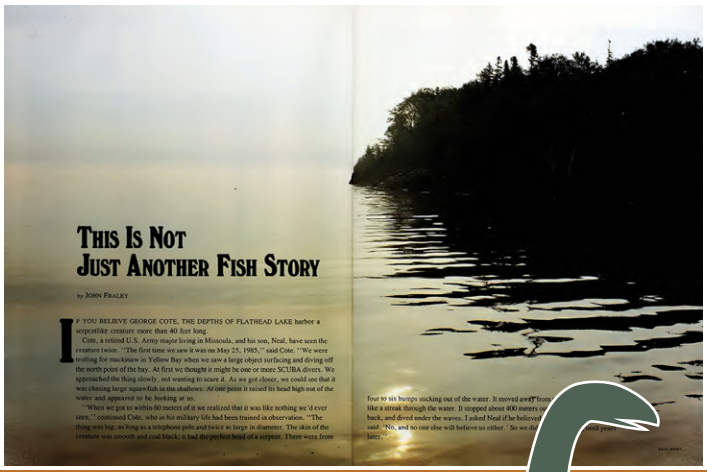
Also starting in the 1980s was *Montana Outdoors*' "Lands Legacy" series profiling wildlife management areas, state parks, and conservation easements across Montana. Each detailed portrait told the story of a property, often including Native American history, homesteading, acquisition by FWP, management challenges, and recreational opportunities. "Shelter from the Storm" (1991), for instance, told the story of Dome Mountain Wildlife Management Area in Park County and its importance as winter habitat for elk migrating out of Yellowstone National Park.

Montana Outdoors also began a popular "Perspectives" series, featuring essays like trout conservation legend Pat Barnes's 1986 musings on catching two massive rainbows, "Fatso" and "Fussy," in the upper Madison River during the Great Depression. In the 1990s, the magazine introduced a new "Watchable Wildlife" series featuring detailed portraits of nongame and endangered species, like "Living in the Crown" (1996), on hoary marmots, and "Underwater Flier" (1992), on American ouzels. "From the Field" featured stories on fish, wildlife, and parks operations, like "Montana's Fish Health Laboratory" (1996).

> **"Through it all I tried to remember that people head outdoors to relax and have fun"**

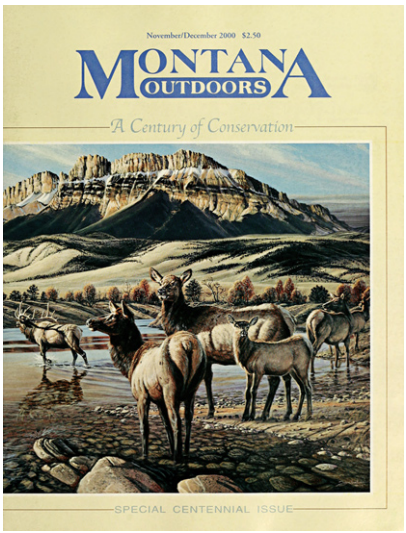
In addition, the magazine devoted countless pages to wildlife, fisheries, and parks management issues, habitat improvement projects, and wildlife research. Among other notable 1980s and '90s articles:

- a groundbreaking two-part series, "Here's to the Rivers" (1988), featuring a monumental study of Montana's major watersheds.
- "Bighorns on the Rise" (1987), chronicling the comeback of wild sheep across much of western Montana.
- "Odyssey of an Elk" (1985), detailing the seasonal movement of elk as they search for forage.
- "Shrimp and Salmon in Flathead Lake: Time Will Tell" (1983), explaining the origins of *Mysis* shrimp that ended up in the lake and crashed the kokanee and native bull trout fisheries.
- "The Right Place, the Right Time" (1989), which told the history of wildlife



Above: "This Is Not Just Another Fish Story," on Flathead Lake "serpent" sightings, November-December 1991.

Above: "Kansas City, Here I Come!," on the record travels of a peripatetic Montana elk, May-June 1991.



Above: The magazine's landmark centennial issue, "A Century of Conservation," November-December 2000.

biologist legends Bob Cooney, Rex Smart, and Jim McLucas.

After a child was fatally mauled north of Missoula in 1989, *Montana Outdoors* ran several stories on the state's growing mountain lion population. Articles like "The Cat with Many Names" (1991) helped readers understand the history of cougars in Montana and why people were seeing more of the large carnivores.

In 1995, *Montana Outdoors* broke the alarming news that whirling disease had infected rainbow trout on the Madison River, potentially destroying one of the nation's most revered fly-fishing waters.

Such somber fare was balanced with articles on natural wonders and oddities. "This Is Not Just Another Fish Story" (1991) told of the more than 70 sightings of a serpentlike creature on Flathead Lake. "Sunnyslope Grayling Defy the Odds" (1998) explained how a small population of Arctic grayling survived in an irrigation canal southwest of Choteau. And "Kansas City, Here I Come!" (1991) told of a bull elk dubbed "Earl" that FWP biologists radio-collared in 1987 in the Sweetgrass Hills near the Canadian border. The wandering elk ended up traveling more than 1,000 miles to Missouri and taking up residence near a shopping center before it was captured and relocated in 1990.

"Through it all I tried to remember that people head outdoors to relax and have fun," Books said recently, "so we also included articles on the hunting, fishing, and other recreational pursuits that make Montana such a special place."

Before retiring in 2001, Books capped his 24-year career by writing the FWP centennial issue of November-December 2000, which took readers from the agency's origins in 1901 through the next 100 years. It continues to be an essential department history used by journalists, students, FWP employees, and others.

"History" continued on page 22.

Sorry, not us

Over the years, *Montana Outdoors* and its predecessor publications have been mistaken for several similarly named magazines including, in the 1950s, *Montana Sports Outdoors*, and, later, *Montana Sporting Journal* and *Montana Hunting and Fishing News*.

Our most frequently confused lookalike has been *Montana Magazine*, which also started in 1970. For years, *Montana Outdoors* staff regularly fielded phone calls and letters from people looking for back issues of an article they swore came from our magazine. After an archive search showed otherwise, they realized they must have been thinking of *Montana Magazine*, which discontinued publication in 2018.

We also regularly receive calls from people trying to reach Montana Outdoor Sports, an outdoor recreation retailer based in Helena. To which we reply, "Sorry, we don't carry camping supplies. But would you like to buy a magazine subscription?"

Logo evolution

Montana Outdoors has featured a number of logos over the years. In the 1970s, the magazine tested several different looks as it sought to establish a visual identity. Staff experimented with different fonts with a grizzly drawing in varying sizes and locations.

In 1984, *Montana Outdoors* introduced a new logo that would standardize its look for the next 18 years. The logo was refreshed again in 2003, when the entire magazine underwent a design and layout makeover. That 2003 logo remains the magazine's signature visual element today.

1970 — montana OUTDOORS

1971 — MONTANA OUTDOORS

1972 — MONTANA OUTDOORS

1972 — MONTANA OUTDOORS

1977 — Montana Outdoors

1984 — MONTANA OUTDOORS

2003 — Montana Outdoors

A career of clarifying copy

No one has worked for *Montana Outdoors* longer than Kay Ellerhoff. Kay was hired as assistant editor in 1973 and left in 1993 to develop, with Bill Schneider, a kids' conservation publication, *Wild Outdoor World* (*W.O.W.*). During its 10-year run, Kay was editor of that award-winning magazine, later published by the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation.

Since 2002, Kay has worked as a freelance copy editor for *Montana Outdoors*, a role that brings her back full circle to the publication.

She recently sent us this note on her tenure as associate editor:

My primary job was copyediting *Montana Outdoors* articles. At the time, we couldn't pay professional journalists to write the articles, so we relied on department biologists and, later, regional information officers. I had a B.A. in journalism from the University of Montana and knew how to write. But even more than writing, I loved the process of copyediting—taking a story that was not bad and turning it into something wonderful and a pleasure to read and understand.

Back then, the *Montana Outdoors* "office" was a trailer house across from the agency's warehouse compound on Custer Avenue, about three miles north of FWP headquarters in Helena. It was cold and drafty, and the rickety little space heater didn't even begin to warm up my work station.

One rainy day, a stray calico cat appeared at the warehouse door. The warehouse foreman knew of my affection for cats, and the two of us adopted her. Guarding clothing and equipment worth thousands of dollars, Calico lived at the warehouse as "chief mouser" for nearly 17 years. When I left the agency, I brought her home with me.

One of my proudest moments while working for *Montana Outdoors* was being promoted to a higher state classification level. To keep pace with changing times, FWP conducted an in-depth survey and evaluation of classifications and job descriptions. Almost everyone's position was reclassified, including mine and that of art director Donnie Sexton (who later became a nationally recognized photographer). We became the first two women in FWP ever to achieve a "professional" classification level. ■

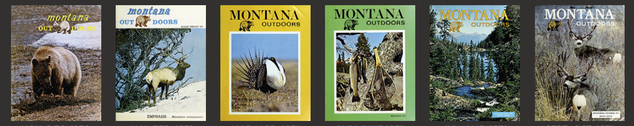
Kay Ellerhoff (in yellow sweater vest), associate editor; Donita Sexton, art director; Dave Books, editor.

PHOTO COURTESY OF KAY ELLERHOFF

50 Years, 300 Covers

Every *Montana Outdoors* cover since the inaugural November-December 1970 issue:

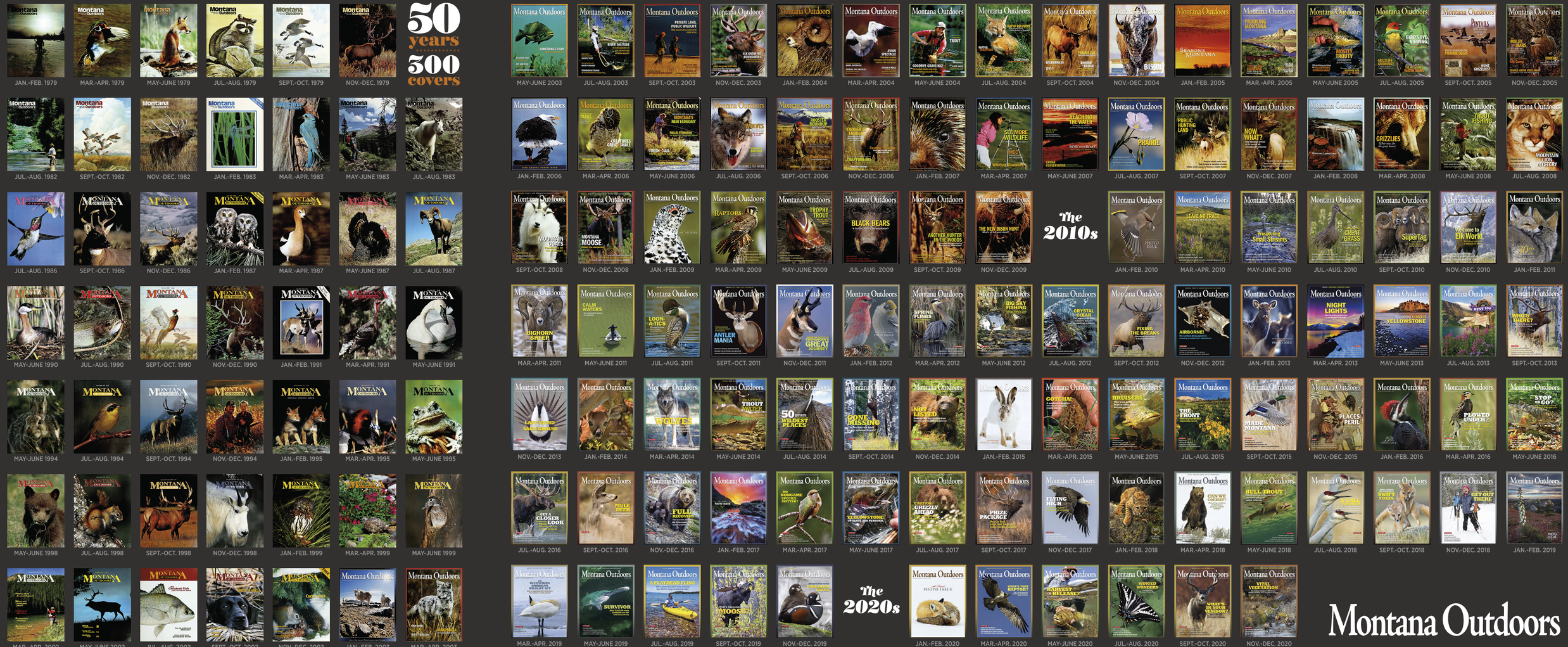
The 1970s



The 1980s

The 1990s

The 2000s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Montana Outdoors

Watchable Wildlife

Of Winter, Windswept Landscapes, and Rough-Legged

HAWKS

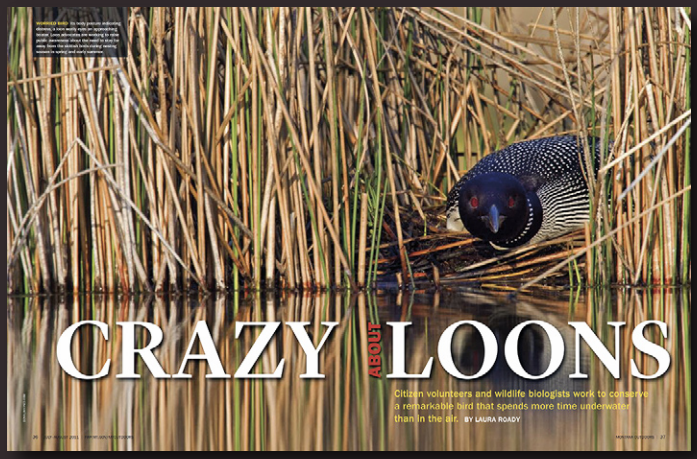
by Deborah Richie and John McNeal

"Of Winter, Windswept Landscapes, and Rough-Legged Hawks," November-December 1993

Searching for Snipe

Thought by many to be a fictional creature, Wilson's snipe is actually a common—though extraordinary—shorebird found across the state. By Ellen Horowitz

"Searching for Snipe," May-June 2018


CRAZY ABOUT LOONS

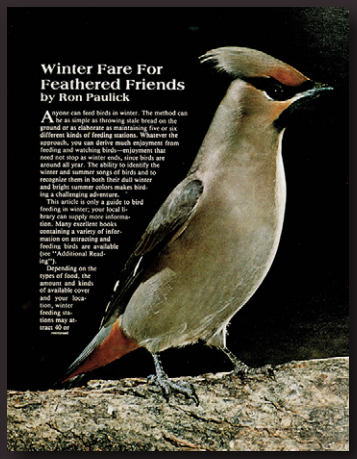
Citizen volunteers and wildlife biologists work to conserve a remarkable bird that spends more time underwater than in the air. BY LAURA ROADY

"Crazy about Loons," July-August 2011

The Peregrine Falcon

by Dennis Flath

"The Peregrine Falcon," March-April 1976


Winter Fare For Feathered Friends

by Ron Paulick

"Winter Fare for Feathered Friends," Jan.-Feb. 1979

Grim Future for a Festive Bird?

FWP biologists and others track harlequin ducks to learn why populations appear to be declining. By Laura Lundquist

"Grim Future for a Festive Bird?" November-December 2019

GOOD ENOUGH GUIDE

16 RAPTORS That Every Montanan Should (Kinda) Know

The "good enough" guide to identifying birds of prey BY TOM DICKSON

"16 Raptors That Every Montanan Should (Kinda) Know," March-April 2020

Birds and *Montana Outdoors*

During the past half century, *Montana Outdoors* has run more articles on Montana bird natural history, conservation, management, and watching than any magazine in existence.

In the 1970s, the publication regularly provided updates on rare and endangered whooping cranes, bald eagles, peregrine falcons, least terns, and piping plovers. During the 1980s, the magazine produced identification guides for shorebirds, raptors, owls, and upland birds. American dippers, neotropical warblers, cowbirds, loggerhead shrikes, common loons, lazuli buntings, and other winged wildlife were profiled in the "Watchable Wildlife" series that ran during the 1990s.

Since 2002, the "*Montana Outdoors* Portrait" located on the inside back cover has described bird species including snow buntings, common loons, black-billed magpies, ring-billed gulls, and sandhill cranes. Articles have also covered the Partners in Flight transcontinental partnership, the centennial of the 1918 Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and other bird conservation legislation and programs.

In addition, *Montana Outdoors* regularly runs features on the biology, hunting, identification, and stewardship of waterfowl, upland game birds, and mountain grouse. ■

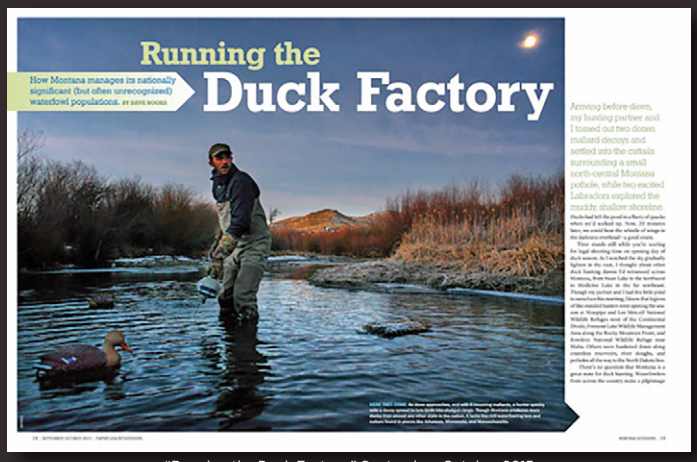
A Century of Saving Birds
Since 1918, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act has protected winged wildlife from wanton destruction. A new legal opinion could weaken it.

"A Century of Saving Birds," July-August 2018

"Love Birds," March-April 2012

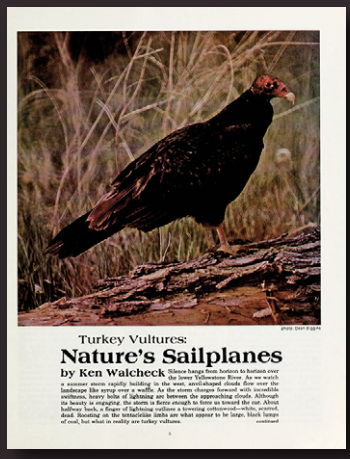
"Tracking Down an Avian Trickster," March-April 1997

"The Eagles Have Landed," November-December 2017


Running the Duck Factory
How Montana manages its nationally significant (but often unrecognized) waterfowl populations.

"Running the Duck Factory," September-October 2015

"Portrait: Western Tanager," May-June 2012



"Turkey Vultures: Nature's Sailplanes," Mar.-Apr. 1982

"Shorebirds of Montana," July-August 1979

THE SANDHILL CRANE
Gangly, awkward and spindle-legged, yes, but it's still a great game bird.
by Ken Walcheck
photos by Harry Engels

"The Sandhill Crane," May-June 1975

If you don't see birds here, you're just not trying.
10
GREAT SPOTS TO WATCH BIRDS IN MONTANA
by Craig and Liz Larcom
1 Onstad Park, Westby

"10 Great Spots to Watch Birds in Montana," May-June 2008

Montana Outdoors
November/December 2003
ELK KNOW NO BOUNDARIES
What that means to ranchers (and hunters)
"WAIDMANN'S HEIL!"
Do Germans know something about hunting that we don't?
LEWIS AND CLARK SLEPT HERE
Tracing the Corps through Montana's state parks

"Every park wolf that steps over the border into Montana and Wyoming and gets shot is money out of our pocket."
"We've got hunting outfitters around Yellowstone going out of business because of wolves."

Cross Currents
Montana struggles to accommodate the growing number of river anglers, kayakers, and floaters
BY TOM DICKSON

Top: The November-December 2003 issue was the first of several containing articles on the issue of elk finding refuge on posted private land.

Above: "Goodbye CRP?" November-December 2010, detailed the loss of grassland wildlife habitat as acres enrolled in this popular federal program declined across Montana.

Top: Love 'em or hate 'em, wolves were a major topic in *Montana Outdoors* throughout the early 2000s.

Above: *Montana Outdoors* magazine transitioned away from traditional film and slides to digital photography in the mid-2000s.

Top: "Cross Currents," July-August 2003, covered the growing controversies among floaters, anglers, outfitters, and others on Montana rivers.

Above: FWP directors editorialized in "Our Point of View," like this one from 2013.

"History," continued from page 18.

NEW CENTURY, NEW LOOK

At the start of the 21st century, *Montana Outdoors* changed its appearance and tone. With the explosion of free news available online, newspapers across the country were struggling. Many magazines were hanging on, but only if they could provide compelling stories and engaging visuals to compete with websites and YouTube videos for readers' attention.

Starting in 2002, newly hired art director Luke Duran built on improvements made by predecessor Bev Veneziano in the 1990s. He designed a new cover logo, created headings for new departments, installed new headline and body copy typefaces, and made bold, informative maps, charts, and other graphics.

At the urging of FWP senior managers, the new editor, Tom Dickson, set out to cover contentious issues like coal-bed methane development, furbearer trapping, and Fort Peck Reservoir walleye management. In a change from years past, *Montana Outdoors* would provide a wider range of viewpoints in these articles, while still advocating for fish and wildlife stewardship and retaining the magazine's charm and personality.

Following the 1996 federal wolf reintroduction in Yellowstone National Park, Montana's growing and expanding wolf population became a contentious issue requiring coverage. "Working It Out with Wolves" (2006) explained how FWP management specialists worked with stockgrowers to prevent wolves from harassing or killing cattle. "Another Mouth To Feed" (2009), confirmed western Montana hunters' concerns that they were now competing with another predator for deer and elk . "Weighing in on Wolves" (2014) showed how Montana's wolf population, which had stabilized at about 800 animals over the previous decade, had not "wiped out" elk and deer populations as some big game hunters had predicted, nor had new hunting and trapping seasons "eliminated" wolf populations as wolf advocates had warned.

WRESTLING WITH RIVER RECREATION

The biggest issue facing fisheries management in the 2000s has been growing recreational use of rivers and fishing access sites—by anglers, outfitters, innertubers, kayakers, and others. More and more people are loving Montana's limited number of rivers, as first detailed in "Cross Currents" (2003).

"History" continued on page 26.

Fine-tuning a popular 'zine

BY TOM DICKSON

It was while working on my very first *Montana Outdoors* article in early 2002 that I realized Montana was unlike anywhere else I'd ever lived.

I'd been hired only a few months earlier to replace Dave Books, who was retiring after running the magazine for a quarter century. Coming in at age 41, I was a geezer compared to the previous editors (who'd started at ages 22 and 34, respectively). I'd edited and written articles throughout my career, first at a national hunting and fishing magazine and then for Minnesota's fish and wildlife agency.

Though new to Montana, apparently I was what the department was looking for. FWP's new director Jeff Hagener, appointed a year earlier by Republican governor Judy Martz, wanted the magazine to once again tackle controversial issues facing the department but to take a more balanced approach than had been the case in the 1970s. "Articles need to contain other points of view, not just ours," he told me at our first meeting.

I was fine with that. I'd written dozens of stories about controversial fish and wildlife topics in the Midwest—wolves, trespassing, walleye management, wetland loss, trapping, and the like. I was just as comfortable calling critics of state wildlife agencies and asking for their point of view as I was working with department biologists and program managers to get theirs.

During my first several months at the job, I worked seven days a week, devouring books on Montana history and politics, poring through *Montana Outdoors* back issues, and reading FWP press releases from the previous few years. When Hagener called me into his office for my first article assignment, I figured I was ready for anything. I wasn't.

Calling the calving shed

The story centered on a controversy over the famous Smith River. For most people, the popular stream can be floated only with a coveted permit drawn in an annual lottery. Local landowners can day-float without a permit, as can guests, if the landowner or a family member tags along. But some landowners also wanted their employees to be proxies able to accompany guests on day floats. "I want you to call Bill Galt and get his side of the story," Hagener told me.

Back at my office, I did a quick internet search and learned that the Galt family ranch near White Sulphur Springs was one of the state's largest. I envisioned Mr. Galt working out of a mahogony-paneled office in a three-piece suit, aides rushing in and out with contracts requiring his signature—sort of a modern-day Ben Cartwright from *Bonanza*.

I called and reached a pleasant-sounding woman, I assumed his executive secretary. I asked to speak with Mr. Galt.

"Bill? He's in the calving shed. I'll put you through."

Calving shed?

"Yes?!" Galt shouted when he picked up the call. I could hear cows mooing loudly in the background. It was mid-March, with two feet of snow still on the ground and temperatures in the 20s. I was trying to get my head around the idea that the tycoon rancher was in a calving shed. *Wouldn't his suit get dirty?*

I said I was hoping to interview him about the Smith River access controversy.

"Let me have you talk to my lawyer," he replied, then shouted over the livestock ruckus, "Lance!"

Turned out that was Lance Lovell, who I later learned is a highly regarded real estate attorney and the son of Charles C. Lovell, then a senior U.S. district court judge.

The attorney is in the calving shed too? My mind reeled.

PHOTO COURTESY OF TOM DICKSON

Dickson with a small Lake Superior steelhead in 2001.

When Hagener called me into his office for my first article assignment, I figured I was ready for anything. I wasn't.

At one point Lovell had to interrupt our conversation to do something noisy. *Did he just set down the phone to help deliver a calf?* I struggled to imagine the scene.

As it turned out, the interviews went fine. Both men were cordial, to the point, and not shy about speaking their mind.

As I hung up the phone, I thought to myself, "So, this is Montana."

Over the past two decades I've been fortunate to crisscross the state and learn more about this wonderful place and its marvelous people. About Montanans' lack of pretentiousness and their willingness to take on physical labor. About a landscape so sprawling that some high school teams travel six hours to play a single game, arriving back home well after midnight. About the importance of wildlife, fisheries, and state parks to this state's identity, quality of life, and economic well-being.

Lucking out

As I dove into my new job, I aimed to maintain the high standards that Bill Schneider and Dave Books had set. I was soon dealt a blow when, just a week later, longtime art director Bev Veneziano told me she had just accepted a new job. Scrambling to find a replacement, I lucked out and hired Luke Duran. He'd grown up in Livingston, gone to college at Montana State University, and was returning home after eight years out of state working as a graphic designer.

Luke took to the part-time art director position like he was born to it. Together we updated the publication and added the

SKETCHBOOK

Their pain, and mine

BY TOM DICKSON

One summer morning a few years ago, I walked past the pond by my office and noticed something struggling in the water. It was a baby house sparrow that must have fallen from a nest. It was obvious that, without help, it would soon drown. Still, it was just a sparrow, and I started to walk away. But then I surprised myself by turning around, kicking off my shoes, and wading into the chest-deep water to save the chick. I was too late.

I put the lifeless form on the bank, then sat down on the grass, soaking wet, to consider what I'd just done. I'm no fan of house sparrows, invasive species that crowd out native songbirds. And you wouldn't think someone like me, who blasts pheasants, grouse, and ducks out of the sky each hunting season, would care about the death of a single baby sparrow.

In fact, I'm generally undisturbed by an animal's death, if it happens "humanely" (a word that I recognize is open to wide interpretation). A deer or elk dropped with one shot. A cow that happily grazes a Montana pasture all summer then is dispatched by a bolt gun. How could someone who eats meat, game or domestic, feel otherwise?

Yet I wince at even the thought of an animal feeling pain or terror. It's a paradox, I know.

I'm not the only hunter who feels this way. My FWP colleague Laurie Wolf told me of a fellow who brought an injured owl to the FWP Wildlife Rehabilitation Center. He'd been hunting elk deep in the backcountry when he came upon a small owl flopping around on the forest floor. It was emaciated and obviously blind in one eye. For whatever reason, the hunter couldn't just leave it there. He threw his jacket over the bird so he could carry it back to the trailhead, then drove to Helena. He walked into the center, handed over the owl, and said, "Here, do what you guys do," then left without another word.

Some of my favorite YouTube videos show people rescuing wildlife. Often it's one or two hunters who find a coyote tangled in barbed wire, or a deer caught in a fence, or a moose that has broken through an iced-over pond. Their rescue attempts are nerve-wracking to watch. The animals could bite or kick, causing severe injuries. Despite the danger, the rescuers seem unable to walk away and leave the animals to suffer.

Most hunters I know would likely do the same. They certainly take pains not to leave the game animals they hunt wounded and struggling. They commit to making a single killing shot, which requires patience and discipline. Sometimes that means not shooting at all, even after a long day (or days) afield. And when they don't make a lethal kill, they track the wounded animal, sometimes for hours or even days, to put it out of its misery (and, yes, to recover the meat or antlers).

It's true that some hunters—though not many, in my experience—seem indifferent to the pain of animals. They'll announce they "stuck" a deer or elk over the weekend with an ill-placed arrow. Or they might shoot at a Canada goose or tundra swan overhead that's too far away to be killed (though not injured). Each year, FWP game wardens report instances of hunters "flock shooting"—firing into an elk herd in the hopes of killing some (and usually wounding others in the process).

I confess I too have wounded wildlife. I've never shot a big game animal without killing it. But each year, despite my best efforts to shoot accurately, I "nick" a passing duck or flushing rooster then watch it fly off, a half-dozen steel pellets imbedded in its belly or back.

Those injuries, which add up over the years, increasingly haunt me. I could stop hunting, of course, but the pleasure it affords still outweighs the moments of guilt.

In *Witness of Combines*, a collection of essays on rural life, author Kent Meyers writes, "...if you wound an animal, you become responsible for its pain." I carry those words with me every time I hunt.

Perhaps it was a sense of responsibility that drew me to that struggling baby sparrow. By trying to alleviate one bird's suffering, maybe I hoped to make amends for all the birds I've injured, and thereby start to heal the small but growing number of wounds inside me. ■

Tom Dickson is editor of Montana Outdoors.

40 MAY–JUNE 2019 FWP.MT.GOV/MTOUTDOORS

I'm equally grateful to our faithful subscribers who keep this publication alive with their annual renewals, and keep us honest and humbled with their heartfelt letters and emails of criticism, well wishes, and corrections.

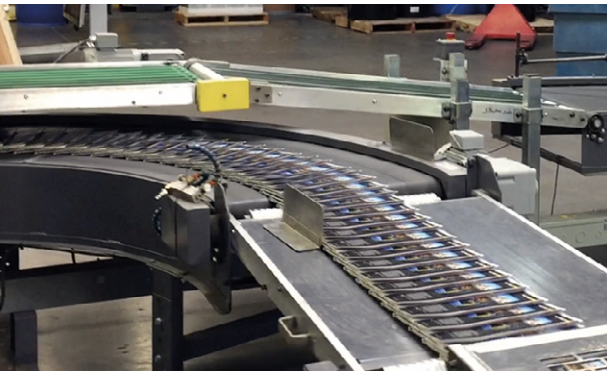
"Tasting Montana" recipe page, "FWP at Work" page highlighting department employees, two-page "Snapshot" photo spread, back page wildlife species "Portrait," and Bruce Auchly's humorous and enlightening "The Back Porch" column, which later became an editor's note now called "The Sketchbook."

Though Luke was a native Montanan, he and I were both pretty green the first few years and were fortunate to be led through the bureaucratic intricacies of Montana state government by longtime (and also part-time) circulation manager Debbie Sternberg. Debbie retired four years ago and was replaced by the abundantly talented Angie Howell, who grew up in Billings and, like Luke, now lives with her family in East Helena.

In addition to making the magazine livelier, our team began a series of subscriber surveys to improve content; targeted circulation to ensure the magazine reaches Montanans most interested in our content; and developed a program with teachers and the Montana WILD education center to bring *Montana Outdoors* articles into classrooms to promote reading and science education.

Like Dave and Bill before me, I'm grateful to the FWP directors, biologists, technicians, administrative staff, and program managers, as well as stockgrowers, business owners, and others, who've patiently explained to me, often repeatedly, what they are doing and why their work matters.

I'm equally grateful to our faithful subscribers who keep this publication alive with their annual renewals, and keep us honest and humbled with their heartfelt letters and emails of constructive criticism, well wishes, and corrections. Thank you all. ■



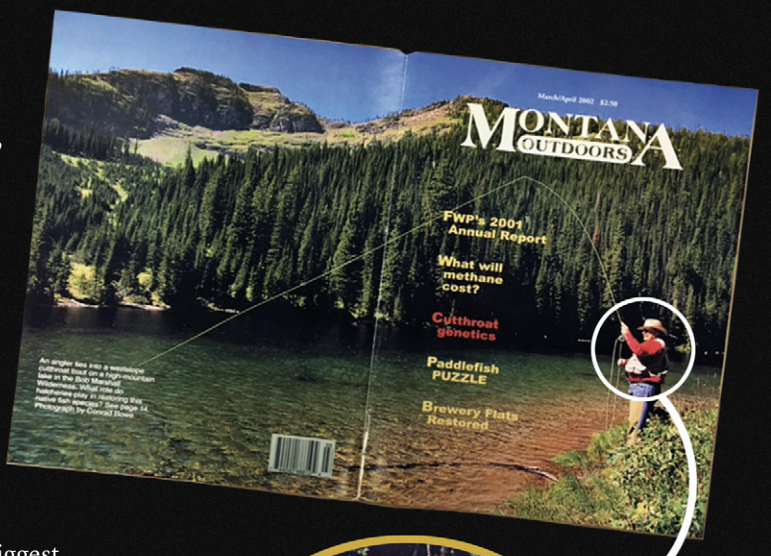
Printed and folded pages of *Montana Outdoors* roll off the press before being labeled then mailed to households across Montana and the U.S.

Serving subscribers

When an issue of *Montana Outdoors* is printed, a whole new category of magazine work begins. Fulfillment, also known as "subscriber services," is the process of ensuring that each issue gets to each customer on time and at the right address. Fulfillment includes providing correct mailing labels to the printer, delivering labeled magazines to the U.S. Post Office for mailing to homes and newsstands, maintaining subscriber records, sending subscription renewal notices, billing subscribers, promoting and fulfilling gift subscriptions, and providing customer service in person and via our 1-800 help line. ■

Montana Outdoors
Don't miss the photo issue.
SUBSCRIBE TODAY!
Don't miss a single issue: Subscribe today!
YES! I'd like a year (six issues) of Montana Outdoors for just $12.
Best Deal!

Our biggest gaffe



Magazines make mistakes, and *Montana Outdoors* is no exception. We've misspelled names, mislocated towns, misidentified fish and wildlife species (birds especially), and flubbed more than a few dates. Dave Books's face is still red from publishing a loon story with the catchy title: "Seeker of Solace."

"We meant to write, 'Seeker of Solitude,'" he said recently. "I've been seeking solace ever since."

But no doubt the magazine's biggest gaffe was mine. It was February 2002, and I'd only been in Montana for a month. Art director Bev Veneziano and I were picking a cover for the first issue that would have my name on the masthead as editor. I wanted to make my mark. I certainly did.

My idea was to run a "wraparound" cover, which means the photo extends around the back from the front. Not many photographs can work that way, and of the hundreds that had been sent in by photographers for that issue, only one had all the right elements. A mustached, heavy-set fellow in a cowboy hat and red shirt stood on the shore of a mountain lake, his fly rod bent from a big fish on the line. It fit perfectly for a story we were running on cutthroat trout.

After Bev mocked up the cover, an FWP colleague walked past and said, "I think that's Mike Taylor."

"Who's Mike Taylor?" Again, I'd been in the state for only a short while.

He replied that Taylor was the Republican candidate running for the U.S. Senate against incumbent Max Baucus.

Okay, I thought. But really, could that possibly be him? I mean, what were the odds a photographer would just happen to send us a photo of a U.S. Senate candidate fishing a mountain lake? And that, of all the photos we had to choose from, that would be the one I would pick for the cover?

A thousand to one? A million to one?

Besides, our print deadline was the next day. We had to get the issue out the door!

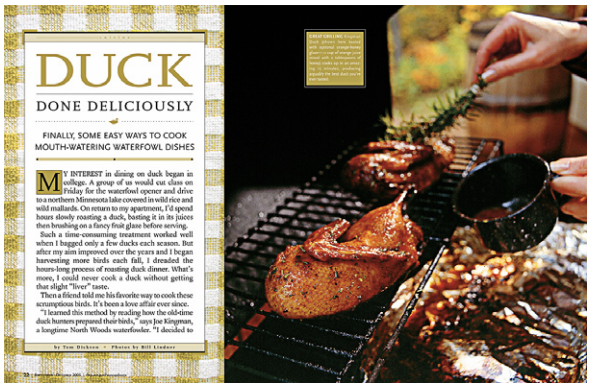
MIKE MORAN ILLUSTRATION

I should have checked. I should have known that Montana is the nation's biggest small town.

"State outdoors magazine puts candidate on cover," read the *Billings Gazette* headline when that issue of *Montana Outdoors* hit newsstands a few weeks later. Yep, it was that Mike Taylor.

The Montana Democrats lambasted FWP, chiding the department for using a state publication to favor a political candidate. FWP director Jeff Hagener, who bore the brunt of the criticism, had to explain that a greenhorn employee from the Midwest had made the mistake. A Helena TV station sent a producer to our office to interview the clueless newcomer.

Fortunately, the whole thing quickly blew over once I explained what happened. But I never forgot my error and the temporary black eye it gave the department. That embarrassment spurred me to double-check the identity of everyone on any cover we've run since. So far, no other political candidate has slipped past. ■



Top: Cooking tips and recipes for venison and other game and fish have been staples of *Montana Outdoors* over the past 15 years.

Top: "Welcome to Walleye Fishing," May-June 2011, provided readers with basic instruction on catching this tasty cousin to the sauger.

Postcard from CWD Country
One hunter's message to the rest of Montana—and visiting hunters—on ways to think about hunting, field dressing, and consuming venison in (and from) areas where this troubling disease has finally appeared.
By Andrew McKean

Above: "Postcard from CWD Country," September-October 2019, told readers what it was like to harvest deer possibly infected with the deadly disease.

Above: Nongame wildlife conservation has been covered extensively in the 21st century, as in this March-April 2019 cover story.

Above: The magazine's first comprehensive article on bull trout conservation and management ran as "An Upstream Struggle," May-June 2018.

"History," continued from page 22.

Montana Outdoors articles also covered new access rules on the Beaverhead and Big Hole, tensions on the Madison and Bighorn, conflicts on the Blackfoot, and the growing challenge of managing scenic, wildlife-rich fishing access sites also visited by boaters, birders, dog walkers, and others who don't pay to use the sites, as anglers do with their fishing license fees.

As during previous decades, tension between state and federal authority over wildlife continued into the 2000s. "Who Calls the Shots?" (2005) detailed federal, state, and tribal authority over wildlife. "Avoiding the ESA Ambulance" (2006) and "Standing Up for Montana" (2014) explained why a growing number of landowners were working with FWP to keep Montana wildlife like Arctic grayling and sage-grouse from ending up on the endangered species list.

The most contentious hunting and wildlife management issue at the start of the 21st century has been the state's increasing—and increasingly inaccessible—elk population. *Montana Outdoors* has covered the topic with:

- "The Elk Next Door" (2003) explained how some new nonresident landowners were shutting their gates to hunters—and shutting down FWP's ability to control populations using public hunting harvest.
- "Taking Aim at Depredation" (2006) and "Shouldering Its Responsibility" (2015) gave voice to FWP officials' plan to increase hunter harvest and thus reduce landowner hardship from the state's hungry elk herds.
- "Where Are All the Elk?" (2014) confirmed hunters' suspicions that many elk had learned to escape hunters on public land by moving to private property.

> **The 2010s ended with a series of director's messages detailing the public trust concept.**

The ubiquitous "Clean, Drain, Dry" billboards across Montana advertise the growing threat of aquatic invasive species (AIS), another topic regularly covered in *Montana Outdoors*. "A State Under Siege" (2003), "Keeping the Invaders at Bay" (2010), and "Meet the AIS 'Pit Crews'" (2018) have kept readers abreast of the state's response to existing and potential infestations of invasive mussels, Eurasian watermilfoil, New Zealand mudsnails, and other waterborne non-natives.

Whirling disease turned out not to be as bad as FWP officials had feared in the 1990s, but chronic wasting disease (CWD)

has arrived and spread just as wildlife biologists predicted. "So Far, So Good" (2003) signaled initial optimism the disease might stay out of Montana, but the later headlines alone—"Disease at the Door" (2017), "Containing the Spread" (2018), "Postcard from CWD Country" (2019), and "To Eat or Not to Eat?" (2020)—told the story of CWD's arrival, spread, and worrisome ramifications for hunters and their families.

Game wardens' essential and sometimes dangerous work was highlighted in "Making a Killing" (2002), "Big Antlers and Big Egos" (2006), "Affable Authority" (2015), "Sniffing Around" (2009), and "Calming the Waters" (2020).

As always, the magazine kept readers entertained with articles on cooking wild game; birding and other wildlife watching; hunting for elk, ducks, deer, and pheasants; and fishing for walleye, perch, and trout.

One of *Montana Outdoors*' most popular issues was its "Best 100" special (2013), showcasing the top things to see and do to fully experience Montana's outdoor life.

The 2010s ended with a series of messages from FWP director Martha Williams detailing the origins of the public trust concept, inherent tensions with private property rights, and how building trust and collaboration is the best way to protect the natural resources that make Montana such a great place to live and visit. In January 2021, Williams was named principal deputy director of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, allowing her to deliver the public trust message to a national audience.

STILL RELEVANT?

As it has since the beginning, *Montana Outdoors* continues to highlight current FWP issues and activities while exploring where the agency and its stewardship may be headed.

But where is the magazine itself headed? It's reasonable to ask whether *Montana Outdoors* can survive in an era where most people—especially young ones—receive their news and information online via handheld devices. Is a print magazine still relevant these days?

The answer is yes. Perhaps never more so.

While social media can be a fun and easy way to consume small bits of information—"Elk hunting season opens tomorrow," "Click here for state parks near you"—it can't tackle complex issues such as how FWP manages grizzly bear issues or resolves water recreation conflicts. "Long-form" media such as magazine articles have room for historical context, different points of view, and helpful maps, charts, and timelines. This allows readers to fully understand what's going on in Montana's outdoors. An Instagram post just can't compete.

> **"As proof of our lasting value and relevance, *Montana Outdoors* today has more subscribers than ever in its 50-year history."**

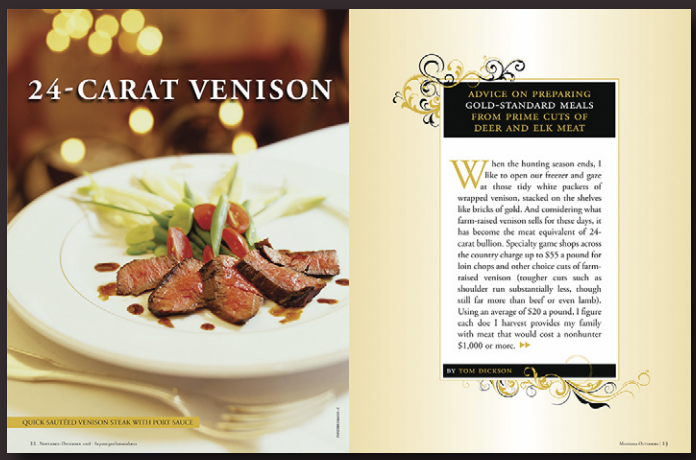
As proof of our lasting value and relevance, *Montana Outdoors* today has more subscribers than ever in its 50-year history. We're not the only print magazine doing well in this digital age. Though some publications have fallen by the wayside, *Sports Illustrated*, *Time*, *National Geographic*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Reader's Digest*, and many others are thriving.

People treasure their smartphones, but many love their magazines, too.

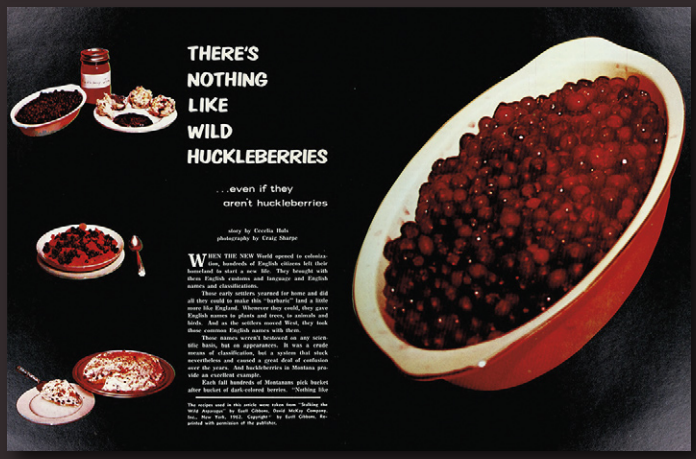
Because articles can be read on handheld electronic devices (though with some difficulty), *Montana Outdoors* also makes all issues and articles available online and via social media. But in a world where so much information is transitory, most of our subscribers tell us they prefer a print version they can hold in their hands, read for a while, then go back to later, again and again, allowing the information to sink in.

Helping people understand issues and ideas related to fish, wildlife, and state parks stewardship is why FWP created this publication in 1970. We've been accomplishing that for the past 50 years, and, with the support of the department and our loyal readers, we'll do it for another 50.

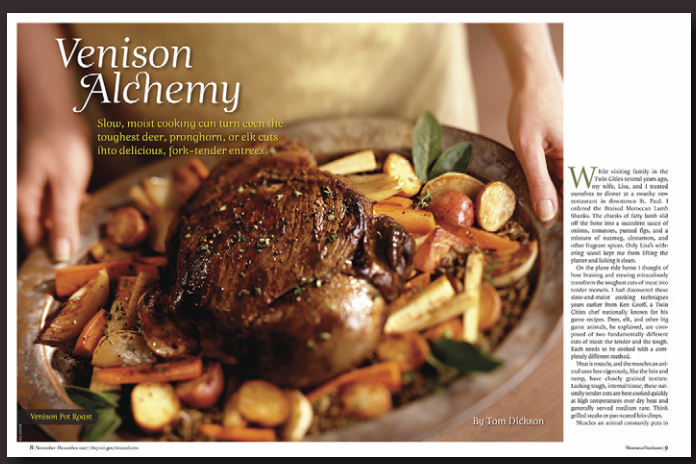
Over the years, *Montana Outdoors* has been honored with multiple awards from the Association for Conservation Information and the National Association of Government Communicators. The magazine has also been recognized by the Montana Wildlife Federation, Montana Parks and Recreation Association, and the Montana Chapter of the American Fisheries Society. Photo by Thom Bridge.


24-CARAT VENISON
ADVICE ON PREPARING GOLD-STANDARD MEALS FROM PRIME CUTS OF DEER AND ELK MEAT
When the hunting season ends, I like to open our freezer and gaze at those tidy white packets of wrapped venison, stacked on the shelves like bricks of gold. And considering what farm-raised venison sells for these days, it has become the meat equivalent of 24-carat bullion. Specialty game shops across the country charge up to $35 a pound for loin chops and other choice cuts of farm-raised venison (tougher cuts such as shoulder run substantially less, though still far more than beef or even lamb). Using an average of $20 a pound, I figure each doe I harvest provides my family with meat that would cost a nonhunter $1,000 or more.
BY TOM DICKSON
QUICK SAUTÉED VENISON STEAK WITH PORT SAUCE

"24-Carat Venison," November-December 2008


THERE'S NOTHING LIKE WILD HUCKLEBERRIES
...even if they aren't huckleberries
story by Cecelia Hals
photography by Craig Sharpe
WHEN THE NEW World opened to colonization, hundreds of English citizens left their homeland to start a new life. They brought with them English customs and language and English names and classifications.
Those early settlers yearned for home and did all they could to make this "barbaric" land a little more like England. Wherever they could, they gave English names to plants and trees, to animals and birds. And as the settlers moved West, they took those common English names with them.
Those names weren't bestowed on any scientific basis, but on appearances. It was a crude means of classification, but a system that stuck nevertheless and caused a great deal of confusion over the years. And huckleberries in Montana provide an excellent example.
Each fall hundreds of Montanans pick bucket after bucket of dark-colored berries. "Nothing like

"There's Nothing Like Wild Huckleberries," July-August 1973


Venison Alchemy
Slow, moist cooking can turn even the toughest deer, pronghorn, or elk cuts into delicious, fork-tender entrees.
By Tom Dickson
Venison Pot Roast
While visiting family in the Twin Cities several years ago, my wife, Lisa, and I treated ourselves to dinner at a swanky new restaurant in downtown St. Paul. I ordered the Braised Moroccan Lamb Shanks. The chunks of fatty lamb slid off the bone into a succulent sauce of onions, tomatoes, pureed figs, and a mixture of nutmeg, cinnamon, and other fragrant spices. Only Lisa's withering scowl kept me from lifting the platter and licking it clean.
On the plane ride home I thought of how braising and stewing miraculously transform the toughest cuts of meat into tender morsels. I had discovered these slow-and-moist cooking techniques years earlier from Kim Groff, a Twin Cities chef nationally known for his game recipes. Deer, elk, and other big game animals, he explained, are composed of two fundamentally different cuts of meat: the tender and the tough. Each needs to be cooked with a completely different method.
Meat is muscle, and the muscles on animal runs here vigorously, like the loin and rump, have closely grained texture. Lacking tough, internal tissue, these naturally tender cuts are best cooked quickly at high temperatures over dry heat and generally served medium rare. Think grilled steaks or pan-seared loin chops.
Muscles an animal constantly puts in

"Venison Alchemy," November-December 2007

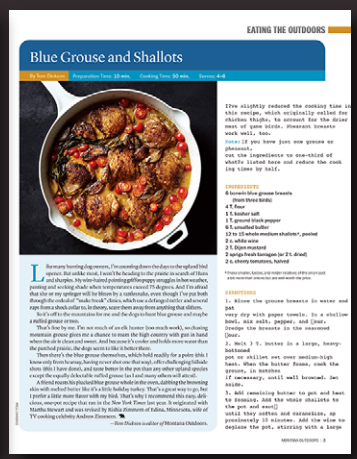
EATING THE OUTDOORS
Mont-Mex Tacos
By Tom Dickson
Preparation time: 20 minutes | Cooking time: 5 minutes | Serves 3–4
INGREDIENTS
DIRECTIONS
I've always loved fish tacos—slices of avocado and crunchy black chunks of white meat surrounded by coleslaw wrapped in a warm tortilla. But until recently I had never found the right combination of ingredients to make them at home. Either there is not enough fish or too much slaw or the spices are off. Then, while visiting an island in the Bay of Green in Mexico, my wife and I were served the real deal. They were perfect, and I took notes.
Upon returning to Montana, I went ice fishing for perch at Holter Reservoir so I could make those Baja fish tacos myself. I did a little experimenting, and this is what I came up with. Any white, firm-fleshed fish will work, including sport-caught walleye, pike, or drum or store-bought cod, pollock, or tilapia.
—Tom Dickson is editor of Montana Outdoors.
For an archive of Eating the Outdoors recipes, visit the Montana Outdoors website at fwp.mt.gov/montanaoutdoors, and click on "Recipes."

"Mont-Mex Tacos," March-April 2017

FAVORITE FISH AND GAME RECIPES
By Ken Marlow
Each issue the store just aren't the same as back from a lake or mountain stream. And dried-out ducks just can't compare with the wild variety.
Fish and game is a way to prepare wild game and fish easy to cook, high-tasting by the cook as bagging the game or taking the fish was for the sportsman. Since mail fish recipes pro-liferate, we've gone back to basics and ingredients which make a dish special. Here are 10 favorites sent to us by department personnel and other readers.
FAVORITE FISH AND GAME RECIPES

"Favorite Fish And Game Recipes," Sept.-Oct. 1973

Special *Montana Outdoors* publication *Savoring the Wild*, 1974


EATING THE OUTDOORS
Blue Grouse and Shallots
By Tom Dickson
Preparation Time: 20 min. | Cooking Time: 50 min. | Serves: 4–6
INGREDIENTS
DIRECTIONS
I've slightly reduced the cooking time in this recipe, which originally called for chicken thighs, to account for the drier meat of game birds. Overcook breasts rock well, too.
Variation: If you have just one grouse or pheasant, cut the ingredients to one-third of whatis listed here and reduce the cooking times by half.
In my hunting daydreams, I'm counting down the days to the upland bird opener. But unlike most, I won't be heading to the prairie in search of Hungarian partridge. My wife hated pointing dogs and the guys straggling in her wetlands painting and seeking shade when temperatures exceed 75 degrees. And I'm afraid that she or my springer will be Blown by a rattlesnake, even though I've put both through the ordeal of "snake break" clinics, which use a shotgun trailer and several cups from a shock collar to, in theory, scare them away from anything that slithers.
So it's off to the mountains for me and the dogs to hunt blue grouse and maybe a ruffed grouse or two.
That's fine by me. I'm not much of an elk hunter (too much work), so chasing mountain grouse gives me a chance to roam the high country with my gun in hand when the air is clean and sweet. And because it's cooler and holds more water than the parched prairie, the dogs seem to like it better there.
Then there's the blue grouse themselves, which hold readily for a point (this I know only from hearsay, having never shot one that way), offer challenging hillside shots (this I have done), and taste better in the pot than any other upland species except the equally delectable ruffed grouse (as I and many others will attest).
A friend roasts his plucked blue grouse whole in the oven, dabbing the browning skin with melted butter like it's a little holiday turkey. That's a great way to go, but I prefer a little more flavor with my bird. That's why I recommend this easy, delicious, one-pot recipe that ran in the New York Times last year. It originated with Martha Stewart and was revised by Rishia Zimmern of Fabius, Minnesota, star of TV's cooking celebrity Andrew Zimmern's "B..."
—Tom Dickson is editor of Montana Outdoors.

"Blue Grouse and Shallots," September-October 2014

TASTING MONTANA
Spicy Thai Fried Catfish Cakes (Tod Mun Pla)
By David Schmetterling | Preparation time: 15 minutes | Cooking time: 5–10 minutes | Serves: 4
INGREDIENTS
DIRECTIONS
Thai food is simple and easy to prepare, and the ingredients are bold and fresh.
Although Montana's cuisine, climate, and landscapes differ entirely from those of Thailand's, I enjoy preparing Thai dishes—with a Montana twist.
Filleting and prepping catfish for the cooking pot is a breeze.
Add cucumber, sliced shallots, sliced peppers, and crushed roasted peanuts. Spoon mixture over fish cakes.

"Spicy Thai Fried Catfish Cakes," July-August 2020

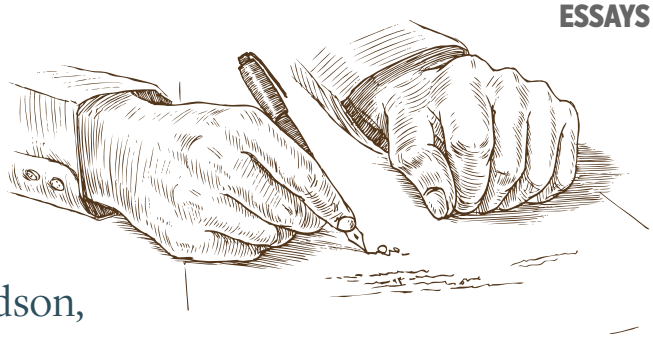
Recipes and *Montana Outdoors*

Recipes have long been among the most popular features in *Montana Outdoors*. In early issues—before the advent of the freeze-dried, ready-to-eat meals available today—many were for camping food. A typical recipe was the oddly named (and rabbit-free) Blushing Bunny, which called for mixing flour, butter, a can of tomato soup, and a cup of American cheese in a pot over a campfire. That may sound less than appetizing today, when campers can quickly boil up a delicious meal of beef stroganoff or kung pao chicken. But for a hungry backpacker in 1973, a tin plate loaded with Blushing Bunny no doubt did the trick.

In 1974 *Montana Outdoors* produced a special publication, *Savoring the Wild*, filled with fish, game, and wild plant recipes.

Since 2006 the magazine has run a regular cooking column, now called "Tasting Montana," featuring a modern take on fish and game recipes, often devised by renowned chefs.

"Duck Done Deliciously" (2005) provided tips on cooking ducks (grill butterflied birds quickly over high heat). "Venison Alchemy" (2007) explained how braising transforms tough cuts and shanks into delicious, fork-tender meat using low heat, moisture, and long cooking times. "24-Carat Venison" (2008) detailed the best ways to enhance tenderloin and other prime cuts in recipes like Sautéed Steaks with Port Sauce. ■



Since its beginning, a hallmark of *Montana Outdoors* has been good writing, whether by FWP employees or nationally recognized authors like Rick Bass, John Madson, Scott McMillion, and Allen Morris Jones. Here are three of our favorites:

Chronicle on a Cabin Wall

By Ken Walcheck, March-April 1979

A warm April sun basted my face as I sipped hot coffee from a tin cup at our turkey hunting campsite in the Missouri River Breaks. As I settled in next to a pine tree, one of my hunting companions trudged into camp with an interesting tale. He related how he stumbled across an old, weathered log cabin with all kinds of interesting notations written on the turn-of-the-century mortar used to fill the chink between hand-hewed logs.

When I questioned him further, he elaborated on some of the notations he could remember. Most of his references centered on biological events that had occurred around the homestead, such as "saw first blue birds; heard first toad; cottonwood buds busting out," and "500 geese went south." Dates, from 1928 to 1962, were included with most of the recordings.

I didn't get to the cabin during that spring hunt, but I vowed to return some day to document the information written on the "blackboard" mortar by some astute observer.

I recently fulfilled that obligation and saw for myself the notation of a man who had a real appreciation for a rough, dissected country and it occupants. As Aldo Leopold once wrote, "There is much confusion between land and country. Land is the place where corn, gullies, and mortgages grow. Country is the personality of land, the collective harmony of its soil, life, and weather. Country knows no mortgages, no alphabetical agencies, no tobacco road; it is calmly aloof to these petty exigencies of its alleged owners."

It was apparent the former occupant of the homestead knew the difference between land and country. He was well aware that "his" country was more than a plain exterior, which to some must have seemed homely and drab.

The former occupant probably didn't realize it, but he was dabbling in phenology and recording some valuable biological information. (Phenology is a branch of science dealing with the relationship between climate and periodic biological phenomena.) For example, after comparing the dates on the cabin wall from 1944 to 1962, I learned the homesteader's "wild cherries" blossomed as early as April 28 and as late as May 21, with most flowering dates between May 5 and 13. Robins could be expected to return to the breaks country between March 25 and April 5, and the little "ren" faithfully returned around May 10.

During our mid-April turkey hunt, I observed many flowering pasqueflowers and sagebrush buttercups as I tramped through the park-like openings scattered throughout the pine forest. My curiosity got the best of me when I visited the cabin and checked the phenological records: The pasqueflower began opening about April 10 and buttercup started to bloom about April 5. These early harbingers of spring were the first showy flowers to greet the gobblers as they dispersed from winter groups to establish breeding territories.

Certain flowers, then, can serve as clues to what will happen next in nature's sequence of events. For example, they can indicate the time when deer will drop fawns, when Canada geese eggs will hatch, and when young horned owls will leave the nest.

The homesteader also recorded other incidents of interest to himself, as he sat by the kitchen table next to the inside "blackboard":

"First air plane flew over this place October 31, 1928—ther was blizard next day."

"Put steel roof on house—I939."

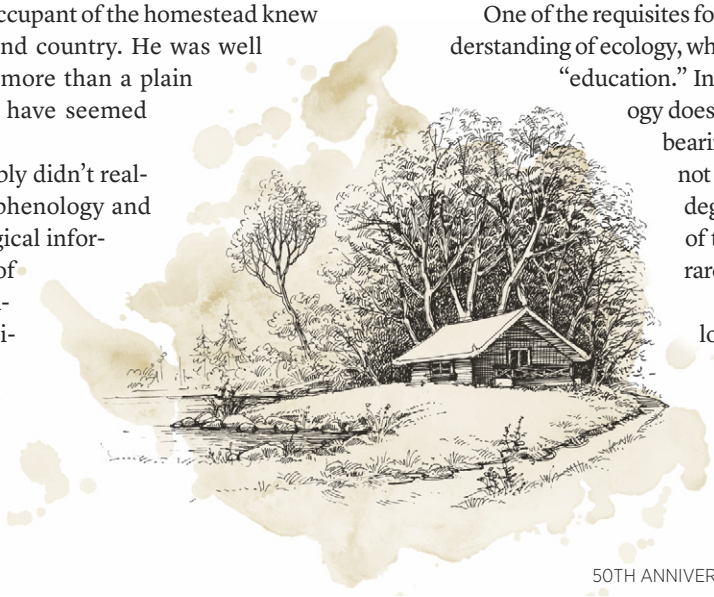
"Started burning coal fall of 1953."

"First helicopter flew over this place Sept. 26, 1953 about 10 o'clock in forenoon, it was going west."

Our biological reporter was a big man, endowed with respect for his fellow man. His sprawling, bold writing told me he wore a size 16½ shirt and size 46 underwear. During the first year of World War II, he wrote, "Equal land and air to all men."

One of the requisites for comprehension of nature is an understanding of ecology, which is by no means coextensive with "education." In fact, a basic understanding of ecology does not necessarily originate in courses bearing ecological labels. Perception cannot be purchased—with either advanced degrees or dollars. Like all real treasures of the mind, ecological perception is a rare trait bestowed on few.

As I left, I turned to take one last look at the old homestead. I felt one regret—not being able to talk with the individual who had such unusual rapport with the surrounding country, a rapport very few of us possess.



DIGITAL COLLAGE: SOURCE SHUTTERSTOCK

Opening Day

By Dave Books, September-October 1985

It ought to be a national holiday, just like the Fourth of July. In fact, the opening day of pheasant season bears a strong resemblance to Independence Day. There's lots of noise, color, confusion, and impassioned oratory—the latter mostly directed toward errant hunting dogs who have proclaimed an "Independence Day" of their own.

But don't blame it all on the dogs. Ring-necked pheasants have a way of stirring things up in a hurry. Their powerful scent can turn even the most obedient canines into rambunctious, goggle-eyed neurotics. Come to think of it, their masters don't fare a whole lot better; something about the ringneck's splashy colors and derisive cackle tends to short-circuit the nervous system of all but the calmest bird hunters.

Big, gaudy, smart, and raucous, pheasants are as American as apple pie, even if they did originate in China. When Judge Owen Denny, the U.S. Consul General in Shanghai, shipped several crates of pheasants to Oregon's Willamette Valley in 1881, he couldn't have known he would be instrumental in spawning a new American tradition. The old judge was probably just thinking in terms of a few pheasant fricassees to add spice to his stateside retirement menu.

But the long-tailed birds had bigger plans. Within 10 years they had spread throughout the Willamette Valley; Oregon's first pheasant season in 1892 produced a harvest of 50,000 birds on the first day!

Other states were soon clamoring for some of the Oregon birds to stock in their own backyards. Although pheasants had been introduced at various times on the East Coast beginning as early as 1733, these early efforts had always ended in failure. Now, however, the right strain of pheasant had found the right environmental conditions, and the Chinese ringneck population took off like a Roman candle. In the early 1900s, state pheasant farms sprouted around the country in profusion, and the effects of early stocking programs soon began to tell. By 1944, it is said there were 16 million ringnecks in South Dakota alone, and pheasants were prospering throughout much of the nation north of the Mason-Dixon line. The story was much the same in Montana; by the mid-1920s, pheasant populations in some parts of the state were dense enough to cause complaints of crop damage, and by 1940 the ringneck was Montana's most popular game bird, a position it has not relinquished over the years.

Pheasants have had their ups and downs since those halcyon days, but they remain among the most abundant and sought-after game birds on the American scene. They're tough, wily, handsome, prolific, and excellent table fare—all the more reason why Congress should declare the opening day of pheasant season a national holiday (Judge Owen Denny Day would have a nice ring to it, don't you think?). But even if that wise and august body fails to act sensibly between now and Montana's opening day on October 19th, I'll be afield with a bird dog or two, basking in the russet glow of autumn and matching wits with that star-spangled firecracker known as the Chinese ringneck. It's one Fourth-of-July-in-October I try never to miss.

DIGITAL COLLAGE. SOURCE: SHUTTERSTOCK

Pileated Woodpeckers in February

By Rick Bass, March-April 2009

More sounds, on the 18th and 19th of February, after so much silence: the air aswirl with the strange raucous chitterings of the pileated woodpeckers calling out as they fly from ailing tree to ailing tree, searching for the ants and beetles that feast upon those trees, as the pileateds, with their long anvil bills, feed upon those insects, so that—again, another marvelous equation—a forest grove of dead or dying trees, rotting or burned, equals the sight and sound of a great pileated woodpecker, 17 inches from bright red head to tail and with an even larger wingspan, flying through these forests with wild whoops and wails and laughs. And while it is an equation beyond our ken to completely measure or replicate or even fully understand, it is not one that lies beyond our ability to observe and celebrate, which is, to paraphrase the poet Mary Oliver, exactly what I have been doing, all day.

And again, the sameness or similarity of the world's secret equations, and its patterns, expresses itself across the different media; as the shouting, laughing giant woodpecker is in many ways but a miraculous blossoming of the deadstanding spars—little more than a leap of thought, as if the deadstanding spar had all along desired to become such a bright and flightworthy and attractive bird—so too does the sound of the great pileated woodpecker carry within it the same energy and pattern, the vibrancy, of the silent sap that is beginning to stir in the living trees, and of the overwintering insects that are beginning to stir in the dead or compromised ones. It all seems to be attempting to merge, once winter starts to lift.

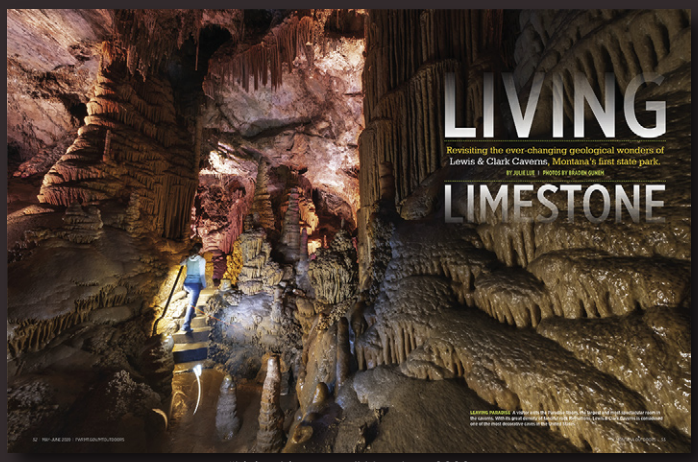
Unerringly, it seems, the woodpeckers swoop to the trees that contain the stirring insects. (How do they know? By sight, by sound, by odor, by intuition?) Tentatively at first, they begin to tap at the chosen tree, probing it, until, within the first few trial excavations, the tender and delicious insects are revealed to the uncurling tongue, and further excavation begins now in earnest. A rapid, concussive drumming issues throughout the forest, the pileated hammering out its deep and distinctive rectangle-shaped cavity, chips and slivers of bark flying everywhere—the bird, it seems to me, preferring to test the green bark of still-living trees, in February. (Do the woodpeckers mark with anticipation, visually or otherwise, those trees each autumn that are or might possibly be newly diseased?) There could be ten thousand reasons, ten thousand related connections, dependencies, and advantages for such an intricate seasonal preference, some acute and exquisite forest balance, but all I know is that in February, one notices with far greater frequency the new-peeled slivers of green glistening bark resting atop the new snow, new wood pale and bright as new-milled lumber, and chips scattered about wildly, looking at first like the residue from where some sawyer passed just hours before with ax or chainsaw. . . .

And in the drumming sound of those excavations, despite the falling snow, one can hear another of the first sounds of spring returning, and in those glistening chips and slivers that the woodpecker has carved from the trunk, one can see that the sap is beginning to move, just like the river, and just like earth, and just like the braids and ribbons of ducks and geese overhead. The butter-colored wood chips are sticky with living resin, and revealed like that, resting upon the open snow, it is as if the blood-within-the-blood, the sap within the sleeping tree, and the sleeping tree within the sleeping forest, is beginning to awaken; and again, whether the woodpecker is drawn to the first few signs and clues of that awakening, or perhaps participates more actively, helping to accelerate that awakening, not just with the booming cannonade of its drumming, and its wild and strange calls, but with the actual cracking open of those new-stirring trees, I could not say for sure, nor have I met anyone who could; nor do I need to know.

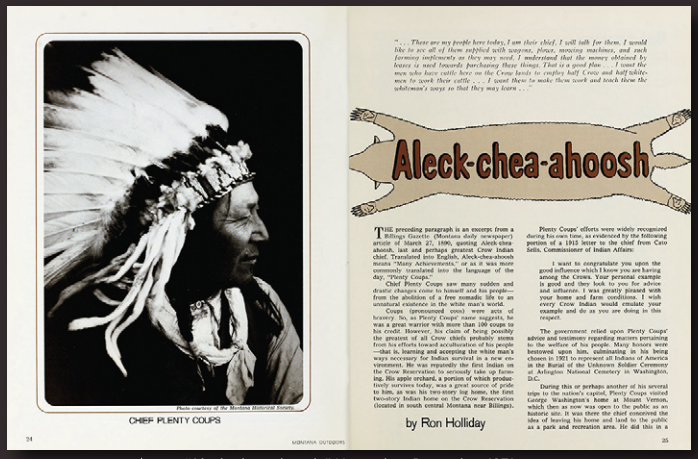
Again, I really need only to know that I like to walk across the diminishing snow, in February, usually on snowshoes, and notice, and celebrate, those bright new-peeled ribbons of bark resting fragrant upon the snow, and to know that there are forests where I can do this; that there are forests where I will always be able to do this.

This essay first appeared in The Wild Marsh, *published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.*

DIGITAL COLLAGE: SOURCE SHUTTERSTOCK



"Living Limestone," May-June 2020



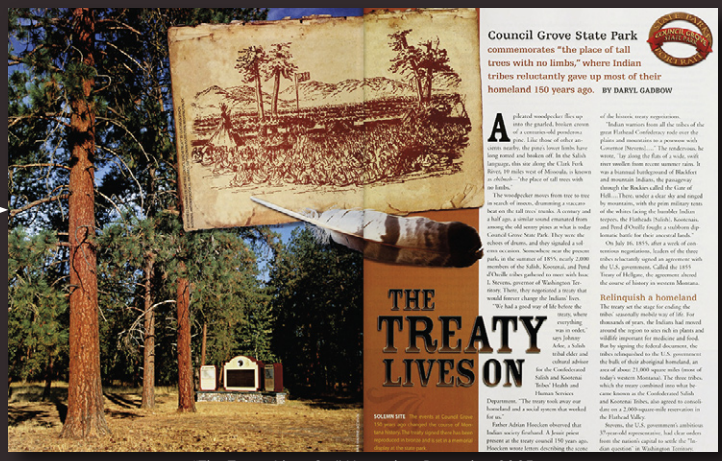
"Aleck-chea-ahoosh," November-December 1971

State Parks
and *Montana Outdoors*

The Montana Legislature added a Parks Division to the Fish and Game Department in 1965. It took another 14 years for the agency to embrace the newcomer and change its name to Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks. Anticipating that change, in 1978 *Montana Outdoors* published a special issue to highlight the state parks system. Thereafter, as state parks became more integral to the department, the magazine regularly ran articles profiling Lewis & Clark Caverns, Ulm Pishkun (now First Peoples Buffalo Jump), Missouri Headwaters, Bannack, Makoshika, and other recreational, historical, and cultural sites.

State parks coverage continued into the 21st century with stories on park maintenance, little known state parks, urban state parks, and state park archaeology. In recent years, the magazine has also focused on the state parks' ailing infrastructure, lack of funding, and inadequate staffing, and the visitation overload during the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic. ■

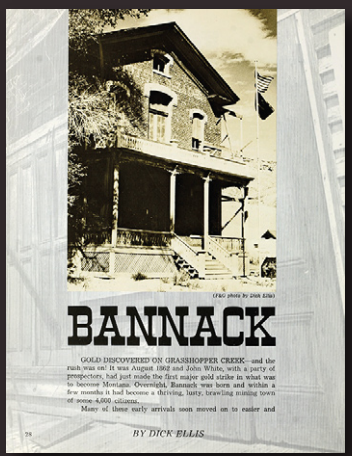
Preserving and interpreting important Native American sites is a critical part of the FWP Parks Division's mission. In **1971**, *Montana Outdoors* profiled the renowned Apsáalooke leader Chief Plenty Coups (*Aleck-chea-ahoosh* "Many War Achievements"), for whom a state park was named in 1965. A **2005** article told the story of the Treaty of Hellgate and the park named for the site where Salish, Kootenai, and Pend d'Oreille tribes reluctantly gave up most of their homeland in 1855.


Council Grove State Park
commemorates "the place of tall trees with no limbs," where Indian tribes reluctantly gave up most of their homeland 150 years ago. BY DARYL GADBOW
THE TREATY LIVES ON

"The Treaty Lives On," November-December 2005

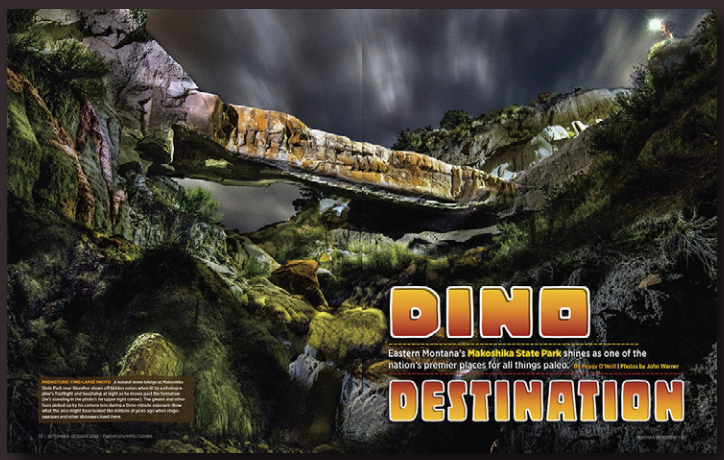
A national historic landmark and one of Montana's premier tourist attractions, Bannack State Park preserves the essence of a frontier gold mining town with all its glory, hardship, and heartbreak.
WHERE THE WEST COMES ALIVE
BY PEGGY O'NEILL PHOTOS BY JOHN WARNER

"Where the West Comes Alive," September-October 2019



"Bannack," March-April 1972

"Rosebud Revisited," May-June 1991


DINO
DESTINATION
Eastern Montana's Makoshika State Park shines as one of the nation's premier places for all things paleo.

"Dino Destination," September-October 2020

At Montana's historical state parks, archaeologists are unearthing clues to how settlers, prospectors, and early American Indians once lived.
BY LEE LAMB
DIGGING DEEP INTO HISTORY

"Digging Deep Into History," March-April 2009

:A Key to the Past," May-June 1993

Insufficient staffing and failing sewage systems and other infrastructure have plagued Montana's state parks system for decades. This **2019 article** exposed the problem and gave voice to managers and other employees struggling amid rapidly rising visitation. Recognizing the importance of state parks to nearby communities, public health, and local economies, the 2019 Montana Legislature provided extra funding to help address some of the maintenance backlog.

"Gateway to the Breaks," May-June 1995

"A Showcase of Nature's Forces," March-April 1981

Behind the Curtain
Montana's state parks system is struggling, even as employees do all they can to keep sites clean, accessible, and enjoyable.
BY TOM DICKSON

"Behind the Curtain," March-April 2019

"New Entrance Fees Help Ailing State Parks," July-Aug 1989

MONTANA STATE PARKS
WET AND WILD
See record-book bighorn rams? Nap on a beach? Leap into crystal-clear water? Whatever your fancy, a visit to Flathead Lake State Park should be on everyone's list of must-do summer adventures. BY PEGGY O'NEILL

"Wet and Wild," July-August 2019

BRINGING **ARTISTRY** TO OUR READERS

Over the years, *Montana Outdoors* has treated readers to some of the nation's best wildlife art and other forms of painting and illustration. The magazine was especially awash in images of mammals, birds, and fish during the 1980s and '90s (editor Dave Books was a big fan). Wildlife art at the time was undergoing a renaissance, fueled in part by nationwide interest in the Federal Duck Stamp contest and the dozens of state duck, trout, and other wildlife stamp competitions run by wildlife agencies. Wildlife conservation groups like Ducks Unlimited and Trout Unlimited also raffled off framed wildlife and fish prints to raise funds for projects. *Montana Outdoors* covered Montana's state duck stamp contest, which ran from 1986 to 2004, each year after the winners were announced.

Another reason for art's early prominence in the publication is that, for years, most wildlife photography had yet to match the artistry mastered by Takehiro Taira of Kalispell, Ron Jenkins of Missoula, Robert Spannring of Livingston, Shirley Cleary of Helena, Joe Thornbrugh of the Bitterroot, and other renowned Big Sky Country painters. Montana may well have laid claim to the most wildlife artists per capita of any state in the union.

Painters also could depict wildlife scenes in great detail: a blue grouse flying off a rocky ridge, a hooked rainbow trout leaping into the air, a grizzly bear with cubs at close range.

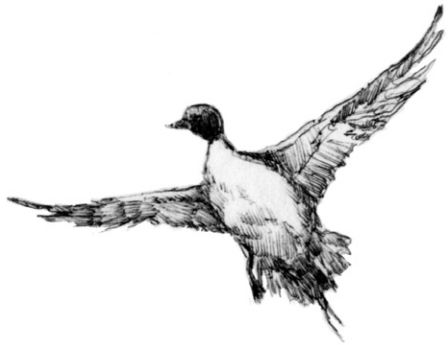
In recent years, the magazine has featured classic wildlife art in "Visions of What Once Was and May Be Again" (2012), on the ways historical paintings inspire modern conservationists. "Danger Around Every Bend" (2015) explored how early 20th-century "predicament art"—charging bears and crouching cougars—may have made Americans overly fearful of large carnivores and contributed to their extinction in many states.

And it's not just wildlife art. *Montana Outdoors* also features illustrations, watercolors, and paintings depicting a wide range of subject matter, from grasshoppers to wildflowers.

On pages 34–37 we present a sample of the artwork featured in *Montana Outdoors* over the past 50 years.

Dave Samuelson, March-April 1986

Robert Spannring, July-August 1988

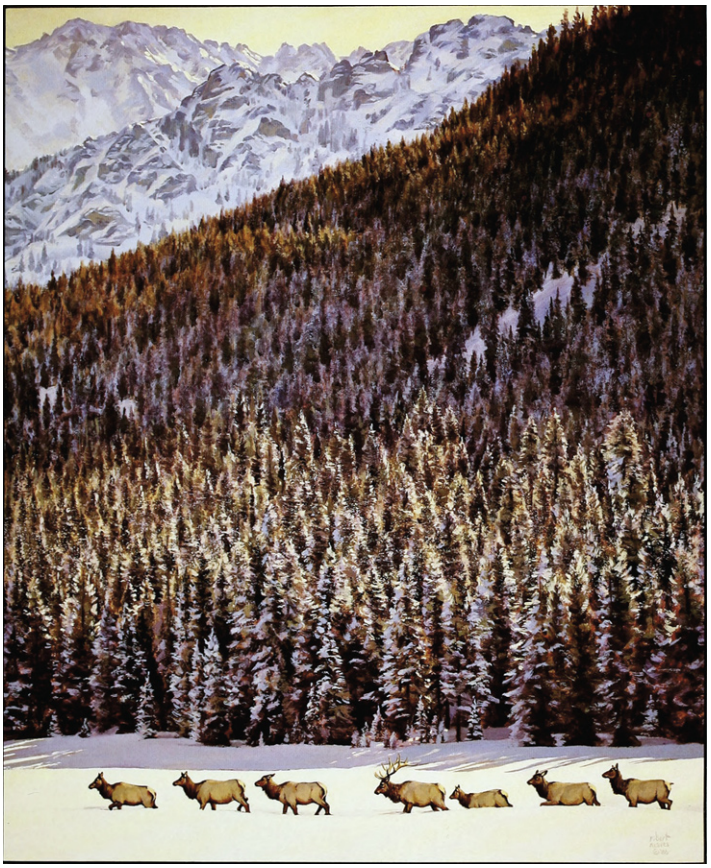


Clockwise from top left:
Joe Thornbrugh, November-December 1987
Nora Wildgen, September-October 2007
Russell Chatham, November-December 2004
Stan Fellows, September-October 2018
Shirley Cleary, November-December 1991

Takehiro Taira, March-April 1983

Glenn West, July-August 1980

Kendahl Jubbs, July-August 1982



Robert Neeves, November-December 1986

Charles Fritz, March-April 2006

Liz Bradford, November-December 2014

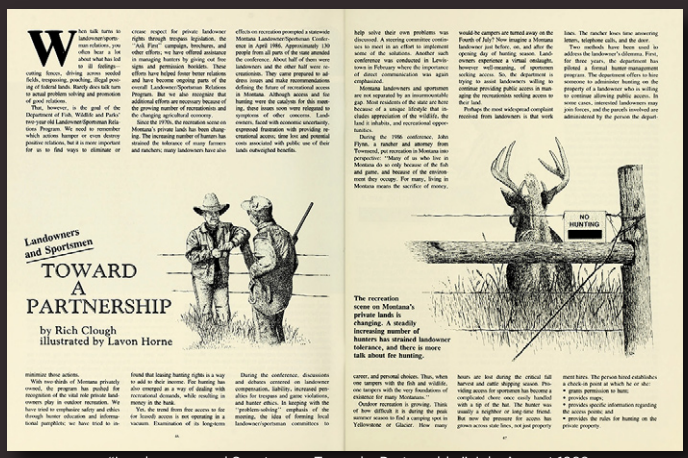
Landowner relations and *Montana Outdoors*

The first edition of *Montana Outdoors* included an article urging hunters to improve their behavior when on private land by following what the department called the "3-Cs": courtesy, consideration, and common sense. Since then, the magazine has run dozens of articles and editorials exploring ways to improve relations between landowners and hunters.

Often the crux of the matter has been tension between those who want to hunt wildlife, part of the public trust, on private land and landowners asserting their property rights. Cooperation is made more difficult by irresponsible hunters who litter, trespass, and shoot up signs on private land. It doesn't help matters that many landowners open their gates to paying customers only.

FWP is deeply involved because public hunting is the main way the department controls deer and elk populations (and funds most of the department's wildlife management programs). Without public hunting, many big game populations would increase dramatically, leading to more damage to crops and fencing. To maintain hunting as a management tool while also promoting its recreational aspects, FWP tries to facilitate cooperation between ranchers and hunters.

The agency and *Montana Outdoors* also promote conservation programs involving private landowners. ■



Landowners and Sportsmen

TOWARD A PARTNERSHIP

by Rich Clough
illustrated by Lavon Horne

"Landowners and Sportsmen: Toward a Partnership," July-August 1988

MENDING FENCES

Ranch appreciation work days allow sportsmen to give something back to landowners who open up their property each fall.

BY ALAN CHARLES

"Mending Fences," November-December 2008

A lack of accessible private hunting land—or too many hunters on that land, depending on your perspective—is nothing new. The author of this **1976 article** summed up the issue this way: "While numbers of hunters and fishermen in Montana have drastically increased over the years, the amount of private land open to these sportsmen has decreased. Landowner/sportsmen conflict is the reason most often cited for these closures. If this is true, can the trend be reversed?"

Good Landowner/Sportsman Relations - are they possible?

by Harley Yeager

"Good Landowner/Sportsman Relations—Are They Possible?" September-October 1976

GREEN GRAZING

Why The Nature Conservancy and Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks are using cows to improve wildlife habitat. by Tom Dickson

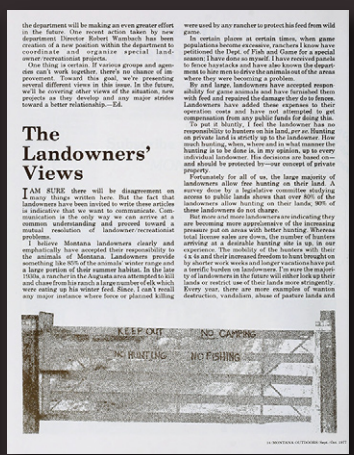
"Green Grazing," November-December 2017

Oiling the Gate Latches

Building Better Landowner/Sportsman Relationships

by Alan Charles

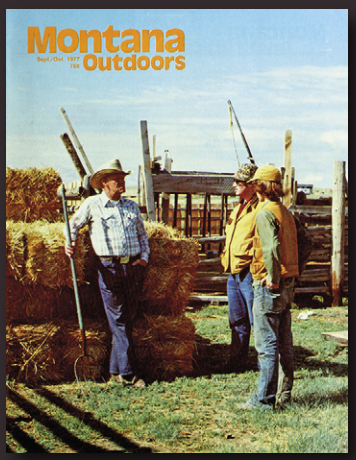
"Oiling the Gate Latches," July-August 1998



The Landowners' Views

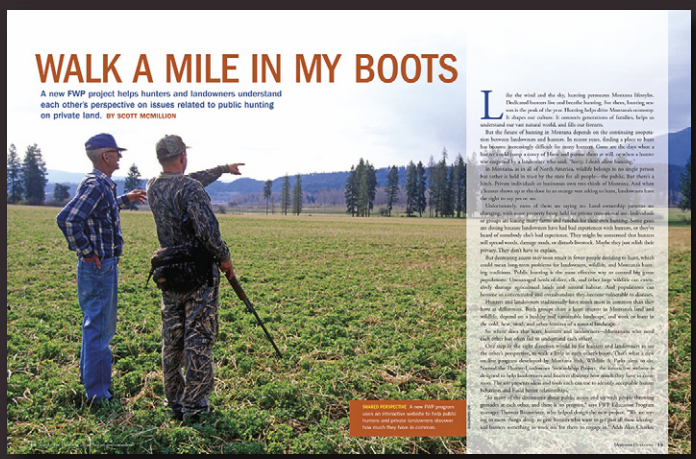
"In Search of a Better Relationship," Sept.-Oct. 1977

"Where Can Sage-Grouse Live?" November-December 2013



September-October 1977

"Block Management," September-October 1997


WALK A MILE IN MY BOOTS
A new FWP project helps hunters and landowners understand each other's perspective on issues related to public hunting on private land.
BY SCOTT MCMILLION

"Walk a Mile in My Boots," September-October 2010

This **2010 article** informed readers of FWP's new Hunter-Landowner Stewardship Project, which the department created to help people on both sides of the fence better understand each other's perspective. The online program emphasizes how hunting on private land is a privilege, not a right, and contains information on obtaining permission, retrieving downed game, hunting ethically, and preventing litter and wildfire.

SAVING THE BEST
FOREVER
FWP conservation easements protect critical wildlife habitat and secure hunting access while sustaining family ranches. Will new landowners support those goals?
By Brett French, Photos by John Warner

"Saving the Best Forever," November-December 2019

CREATING THE
WILDLIFE-FRIENDLY
FENCE
FWP provides instruction on how to modify fencing to prevent elk, deer, and pronghorn from injuring themselves and damaging private property.
BY CHRISTINE BADE

"Creating the Wildlife-Friendly Fence," July-August 2009

HUNTING ACCESS
PERMISSION
DENIED
For decades, most landowners granted requests by hunters to access their property. Why so many are changing their answer, and what that holds for the future of public hunting.
BY HAL HERRING

"Permission Denied," November-December 2008

FARM BILL
EXCEEDING
EXPECTATIONS
While not offering much for Montana's dispirited CRP fans, the 2018 Farm Bill's other land and water conservation programs will provide tens of millions of dollars to help farmers, ranchers, wildlife, and public recreational access in the state's prairie region.
By Catherine Wightman

"Exceeding Expectations," July-August 2010

Anatomy of an Article

"Secrets of a Morelling Master" MARCH-APRIL 2015

STORY ORIGINS

Ideas for *Montana Outdoors* articles come from senior FWP managers, department field staff, freelance journalists, and the editor. The goal of each issue is to present a mix of articles and other content that both entertain our readers while informing them about FWP issues and activities.

In this case, the editor saw from news reports in recent years that interest in morel hunting was growing, especially following several large western Montana forest fires that created ideal harvest conditions. He figured the best way to learn how morelling worked, and then convey that to readers, would be to tag along with mushrooming expert Larry Evans of the Western Montana Mycological Society.

BUILDING THE ARTICLE

Montana Outdoors articles are written by the editor, FWP staff, and freelance journalists. All involve extensive online research and interviews with experts. With this morelling article, we obtained most of the information we needed from a single authority. Controversial articles require additional interviews with people on various sides of an issue.

Once information is gathered, it's organized into a logical order and then written and rewritten until it begins to make sense as a coherent and entertaining story.

HEADLINES

The role of a headline is to attract and hold the reader's attention, often with alliteration, rhyme, puns, or other poetic devices, while relating some of the article's content or intent. The subhead further clarifies what the article is about. In this case, the terms "morelling master" and "mushroom whisperer" conveyed both the main character's guru-like status among other mushroomers and his playful nature.

REVIEW

All articles are reviewed by FWP staff and other experts for accuracy. For stories on controversial or complex topics, like grizzly bear management or sage-grouse conservation, a dozen or more experts from FWP and elsewhere may review the text before publication.

PHOTO SELECTION

Two months before each issue is produced, the art director sends an email to photographers requesting photo submissions for the stories in development. Sometimes photojournalists are hired to take specific shots. These processes provide abundant images from which to illustrate each article.

For this particular article, *Montana Outdoors* contracted a freelance photographer to accompany Evans and document a morel hunt in a burned forest.

LAYOUT AND DESIGN

Layout begins when the art director has the components of the article ready to assemble: the article and headline, photos, and other graphic elements.

The headline "Secrets of a Morelling Master" called for a photo that answered the question, *Who is the morelling master?* We used a large photo of Evans gazing at a morel, portraying him in a contemplative, Zen-like pose. The image also worked to show how difficult it can be to see a morel, even when in plain view.

The art director structures the graphic elements to guide the reader's eye through the article. The headline is featured in a large type size to first grab the reader's attention, followed by a smaller subhead, and, lastly, the story text in the magazine's standard font size and column format.

Visual elements are arranged on an invisible grid template to create a sense of order and visual harmony (see details at right). Effective design also includes "white space" so elements don't appear crowded. In this case, the art director added two morels with shadows that created a "3-D" effect, as if they were sitting on the page. The morels were arranged to draw the reader's eye to the beginning of the text columns, a visual "entry point" to the story.

POST LAYOUT

After an article is laid out, the text is copyedited to improve grammar, remove redundancies, clarify main points, and enliven the writing. Then all facts are double-checked, photo credits are verified, and, finally, each article is proofread—twice—to catch any remaining typos or other errors.

When the editor and art director agree that all articles in an issue are ready, they send the magazine to the printer to have it printed, labeled with subscriber addresses, and delivered to mailboxes and newsstands across Montana and the United States.

On location: (left to right) photographer Paul Queneau, mushroom expert Larry Evans, editor Tom Dickson, and art director Luke Duran.

The photographer captured images envisioned by the art director, including Larry Evans with a map showing fire intensity, scenics of the burned forest landscape, images of mushroom foraging, and close-ups of morels, all of which helped set the scene for readers and visually illustrate the article's content.

Secrets of a Morelling Master

A day afield with Montana's "Mushroom Whisperer"

By Tom Dickson. Photos by Paul Queneau.

"Here's one," says Larry Evans, reaching under a fallen tree to harvest his find before bounding higher up the charred mountainside. "Here's another," he calls out. On this cloudy mid-June morning, photographer Paul Queneau and I are trying to follow Evans up an impossibly steep south-facing slope of the Swan Range in the Seeley-Swan Valley. Evans scrambles back down the hillside, bent at the waist to see underneath logs or beneath uprooted tree roots where a morel mushroom might hide. "It's a good idea to look from above and below," he advises, before bounding back up the slope like a mountain goat. "Remember," he shouts back at us, "morels like to disguise themselves as pine cones!"

Evans is a morelling master, and keeping up with him—intellectually and physically—is no easy task.

We began our search for the delectable mushrooms along the edge of a 600-acre fire that burned the previous September. The mountainside was black with charred trees, many of them fallen and crisscrossing the forest floor like spilled drinking straws. After driving us to the burn boundary, Evans jumps out of his vehicle and tests the soil temperature by plunging his finger into the duff. "It's about 55 degrees here. Perfect." We follow him through the burned forest and quickly see that the blackened earth has been trampled by previous pickers. "Too easily accessible," Evans explains. "Anyway, it's too dry here. We need more soil moisture."

We drive a half mile to a creek, which Evans says can be a good place to find morels. Creek ravines are humid, contain lots of organic matter, and have a high water table along the banks.

Morels grow where it's wet.

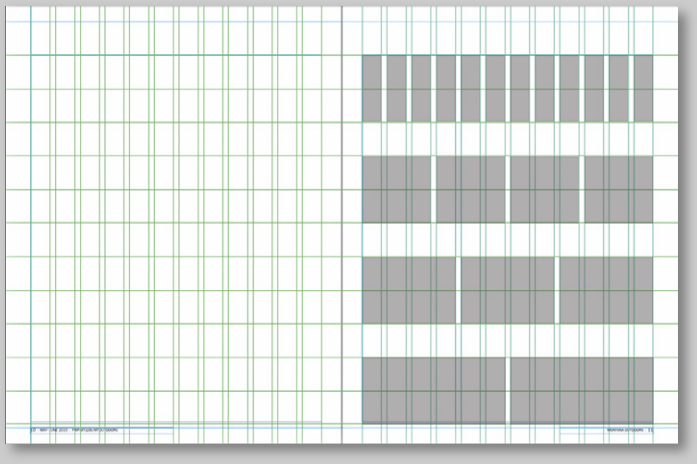
Evans trots off, checking under toppled trees and other structures that hold moisture in the soil. Downed timber and dense tangles discourage commercial pickers, he tells us. So even if a place has been picked over—signaled by footprints and rings of cut morels—it's worth pushing through the heavy brush. "For the professionals, it's all about efficiency," explains Evans, who picked commercially before becoming a morel broker who buys from pickers and sells to restaurants and gourmet food stores. "They don't have time to climb over big logs and can't risk slipping and getting injured." He looks down

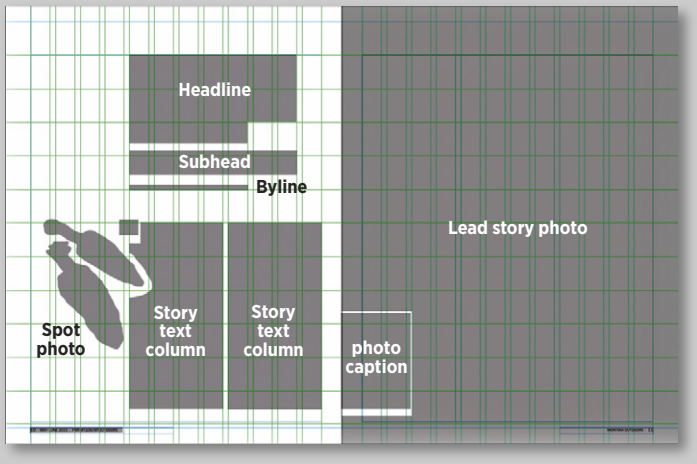
JUST WHERE HE SUSPECTED "I imagine I'm a morel, and then look for places that feel like home," says mycologist Larry Evans, of Missoula. Prime locales are in forests burned the previous year where red conifer needles litter the floor, indicating a fire that was not too hot. Morels sprout only when soil temperature and moisture are at the right levels, Evans says.

Underlying every article layout in *Montana Outdoors* is an invisible gridded template. This "skeleton," or structure, establishes margins and spacing and reinforces a consistent look and feel to all articles. *Montana Outdoors* features a modular 12-column grid that can be used to create 2-, 3- and 4-column layouts in which text can flow (right). The grid also creates consistent "gutters," or vertical space, between columns.

In the morelling article, we used a 3-column layout, with the first of the three columns left empty to create white space (below right). The photo of two morels was placed in the area of the first column so that they jut into the second column where the story text starts. All visual elements—headline, subhead, byline, photos, story text, and page numbers—are aligned to the horizontal and vertical guides of the grid to give the design order and clarity.

By adhering to a grid, all *Montana Outdoors* stories are presented in a uniform format. When subscribers receive an issue of the magazine after it rolls off the press (below), each article they read has a consistent, familiar structure—even if they can't readily see it.





Graphic design: the art of storytelling

By Luke Duran, *Montana Outdoors* art director

"*How am I going to crack this nut?*" With each article I lay out, I'm back at square one—staring at a blank page asking myself this question. The answer is unique to each story, and graphic design is the process I use to find it.

While words and sentences are at the heart of an article, my challenge as a graphic designer is to visually enrich and clarify the article's main points. I do this by pairing the written story with appropriate photos and artwork and arranging these elements on a page. To me, the magic of graphic design is how creative placement of the elements can breathe life and energy into the final article.

Like a supporting actor, good design is subtle. It enhances the words and images without calling too much attention to itself.

Take, for example, the opening spread of "The Bighorn's Rocky Recovery," featured in the March-April 2011 issue. If you compare graphic design to a jigsaw puzzle, the pieces here were: headline and subhead, photo of a bighorn sheep, byline, and white space. Without thoughtful placement of these elements, the layout would resemble a confusing, uninspired collection of random puzzle pieces.

I employed several design techniques and considerations to help make this opening spread come to life:

- Looking at the bighorn photo, two things caught my eye: the beautiful curvature and texture of the horn, and the rich texture of the hair. To highlight these features, I removed the color from the photo and increased visual contrast by rendering the image as a sepia tone. Good spreads need a visual "entry point" to draw the reader in, so I left the sheep's eye in full color as a vibrant point of interest. I also tightly cropped the photo, removing extraneous, distracting detail until all that remained of the image were the horn and fur textures and the eye.
- The oval space within the sheep's horn served as a clear spot to place the text. I chose a bold, slab-serif font for the headline, one that matched the visual strength of the photo, and placed it opposite the bighorn's eye. I rendered some of the words in the same brown tone as the eye to provide visual continuity.
- The subhead and byline fit nicely below the headline, centered within the remaining space. This arrangement provided a clear and legible introduction to the article.
- As a finishing touch, I added a subtle ornament above the subhead to underscore the headline and add a touch of western flair to this opening spread.

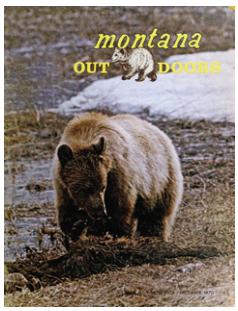
THE
BIGHORN'S
ROCKY RECOVERY
After a catastrophic decline in the early 1900s, Montana's bighorn sheep population has grown into one of the nation's largest. But habitat loss, highway fatalities, and deadly disease could send numbers tumbling again.
BY TOM DICKSON

Above: the completed opening spread layout. Below left: Without graphic design, the article elements are dull and unengaging.

The Bighorn's Rocky Recovery

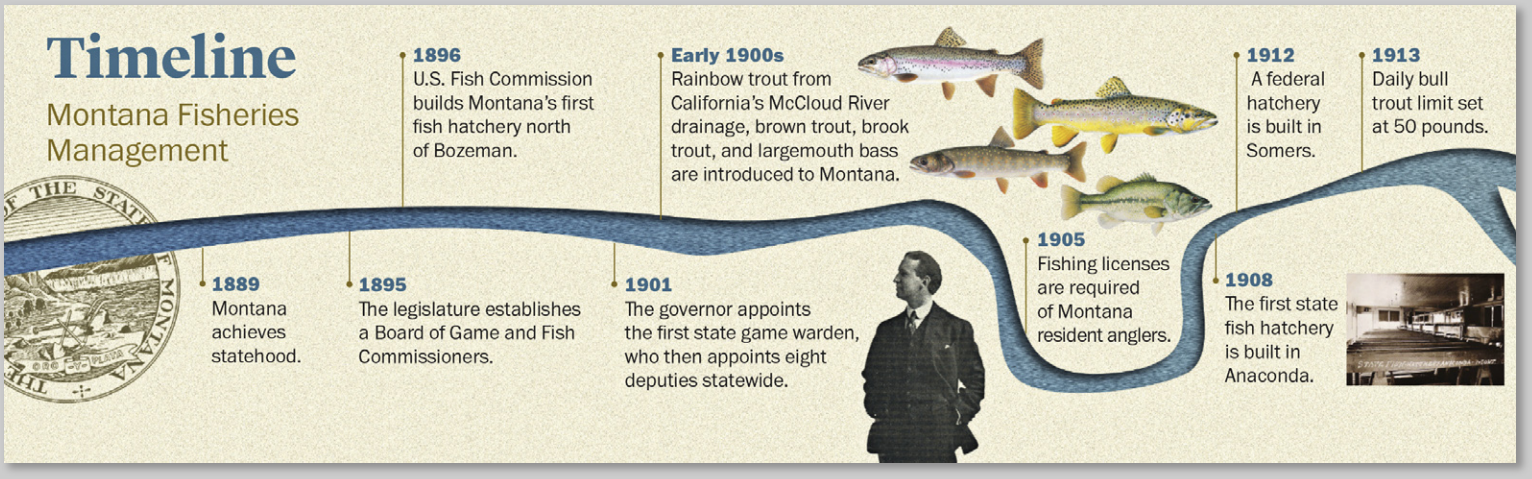
After a catastrophic decine in the early 1900s, Montana's bighorn sheep population has grown into one of the nation's largest. But habitat loss, highway fatalities, and deadly disease could send numbers tumbling again.

by Tom Dickson



The little bear

Ever since the magazine's first year, and especially in recent years, most *Montana Outdoors* articles have ended with a small grizzly silhouette (sidebars often end with an "end box" ■). The bear icon is based on an illustration, likely drawn by Vern Craig, included on the cover of the publication's first issue.


Timeline
Montana Fisheries Management
1889
Montana achieves statehood.
1895
The legislature establishes a Board of Game and Fish Commissioners.
1896
U.S. Fish Commission builds Montana's first fish hatchery north of Bozeman.
1901
The governor appoints the first state game warden, who then appoints eight deputies statewide.
Early 1900s
Rainbow trout from California's McCloud River drainage, brown trout, brook trout, and largemouth bass are introduced to Montana.
1905
Fishing licenses are required of Montana resident anglers.
1908
The first state fish hatchery is built in Anaconda.
1912
A federal hatchery is built in Somers.
1913
Daily bull trout limit set at 50 pounds.

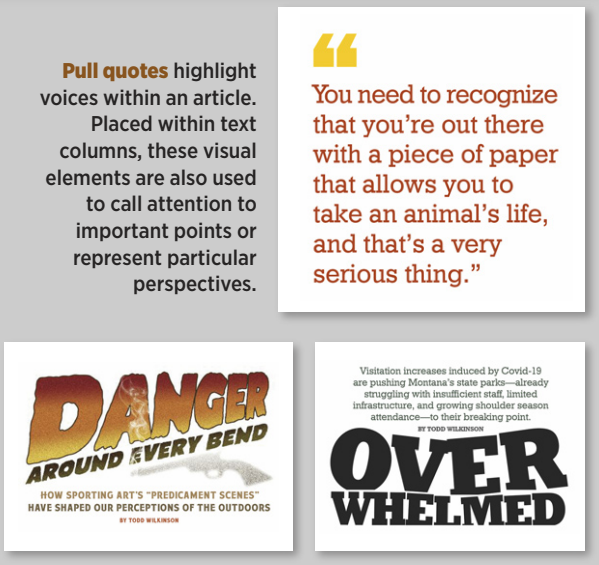
Timelines are a graphical way to present information in a linear manner. In the example above, the history of Montana fisheries management was displayed with significant events presented in chronological order. The blue river served as visual navigation to guide the reader through the events.

Graphic design **toolkit**

Beyond words and photos, designers use various techniques to explain story details and enhance visual appeal. Here are some of the tools we use in *Montana Outdoors* to offer readers a richer reading experience.

Pull quotes highlight voices within an article. Placed within text columns, these visual elements are also used to call attention to important points or represent particular perspectives.

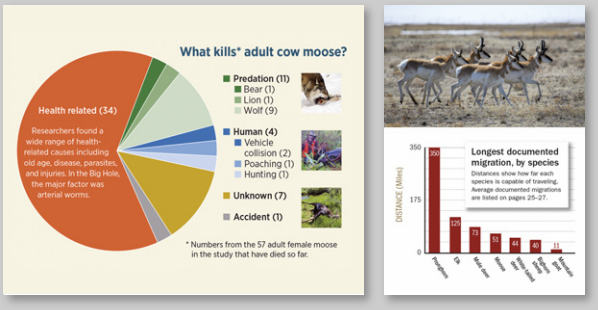
> "You need to recognize that you're out there with a piece of paper that allows you to take an animal's life, and that's a very serious thing."



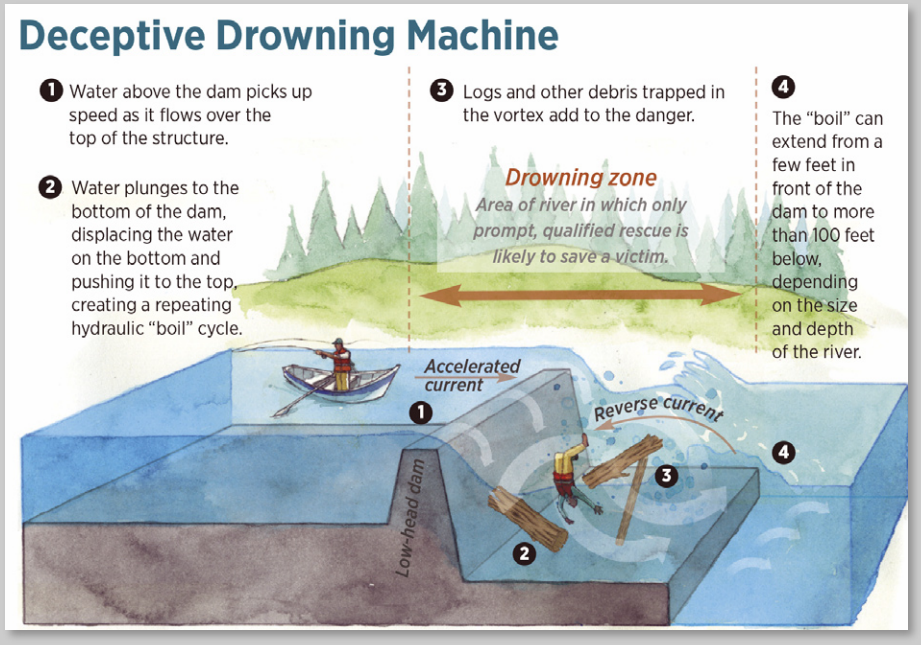
Maps help readers locate places referred to in an article while providing color and visual interest. For an article on Arctic grayling recovery, these maps showed the location of the Upper Big Hole River, Montana towns located within the fishery, and the current and historic range of grayling.

DANGER AROUND EVERY BEND
HOW SPORTING ART'S "PREDICAMENT SCENES" HAVE SHAPED OUR PERCEPTIONS OF THE OUTDOORS
BY TODD WILKINSON
Visitation increases induced by Covid-19 are pushing Montana's state parks—already struggling with insufficient staff, limited infrastructure, and growing shoulder season attendance—to their breaking point.
BY TODD WILKINSON
OVERWHELMED

When not overdone, creative **typography** can add character and drama to an article layout. It can also give readers a sense of what the article is about.


What kills* adult cow moose?
Health related (34)
Researchers found a wide range of health-related causes including old age, disease, parasites, and injuries. In the Big Hole, the major factor was arterial worms.
Predation (11)
Bear (1)
Lion (1)
Wolf (9)
Human (4)
Vehicle collision (2)
Poaching (1)
Hunting (1)
Unknown (7)
Accident (1)
* Numbers from the 57 adult female moose in the study that have died so far.
Longest documented migration, by species
Distances show how far each species is capable of traveling. Average documented migrations are listed on pages 25–27.
DISTANCE (Miles)

Infographics like pie charts and bar graphs show points of data, and are a good tool to explain scientific trends or study results.


Deceptive Drowning Machine
1 Water above the dam picks up speed as it flows over the top of the structure.
2 Water plunges to the bottom of the dam, displacing the water on the bottom and pushing it to the top, creating a repeating hydraulic "boil" cycle.
3 Logs and other debris trapped in the vortex add to the danger.
4 The "boil" can extend from a few feet in front of the dam to more than 100 feet below, depending on the size and depth of the river.
Drowning zone
Area of river in which only prompt, qualified rescue is likely to save a victim.
Accelerated current
Reverse current
Low-head dam

Montana Outdoors hires artists and illustrators to create **graphics** that visually detail specific messages or provide clarity to a story concept. This illustration provided readers with a better understanding of the unseen hazards that lowhead dams pose to recreational floaters and anglers.

Photography and *Montana Outdoors*

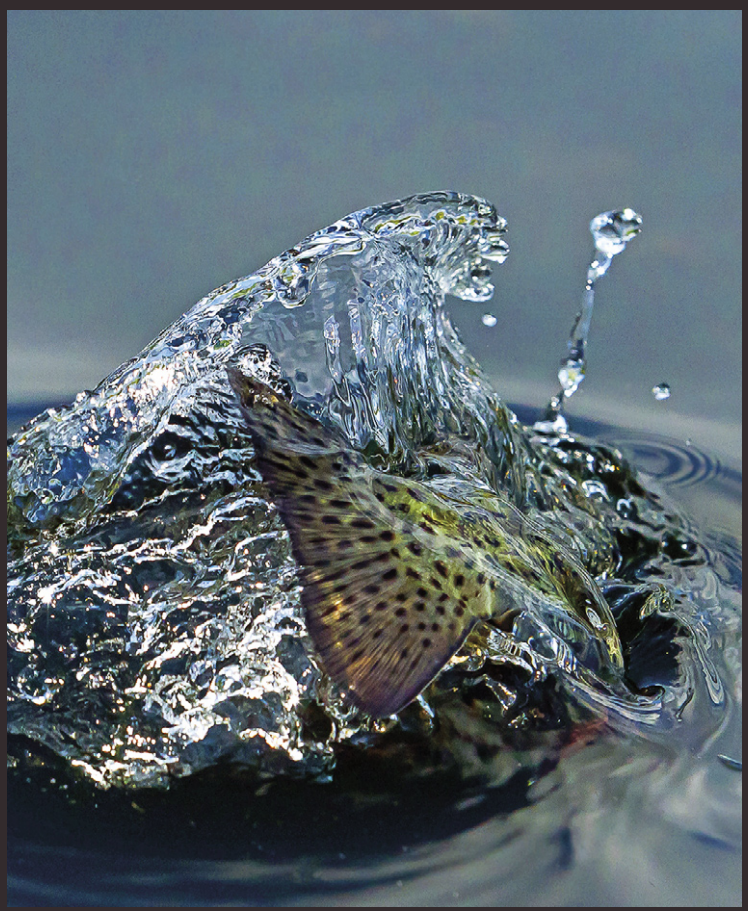
Wildlife and landscape photography is a hallmark of *Montana Outdoors*. So important are images to the magazine that in 1981 editor Dave Books devoted an entire issue to photography, a tradition that has continued for the past 40 years.

In addition to the magazine's January-February photo issue, which each year inspires more letters and emails of praise and congratulations than any other issue, *Montana Outdoors* features covers, two-page "Snapshot" spreads, and articles illustrated with stunning photographs of wildlife, state parks, fish, scenic sights, and outdoor recreation activities.

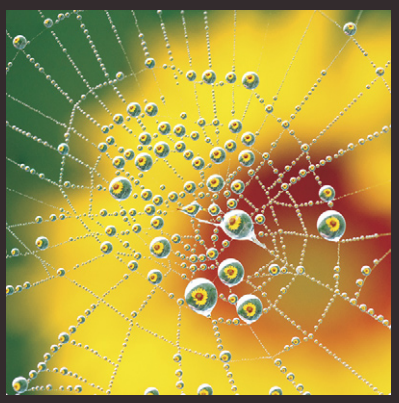
Finding the right images to support an article can be difficult. For each issue, art director Luke Duran must find visually interesting and appropriate photos with perfect focus and the right combination of composition, lighting, and color. He must also locate hard-to-find artistic shots of bass and walleye angling, ice fishing, and state parks activities, especially in eastern Montana. He assigns photojournalists to take shots of FWP staff, local landowners, and others featured in articles. Fortunately he's able to call upon hundreds of professional and top-notch amateur photographers who live in Montana.

Duran selected the images on pages 44–47 to represent the wide range of photographic excellence he has featured in *Montana Outdoors* since starting work here in 2002. ■

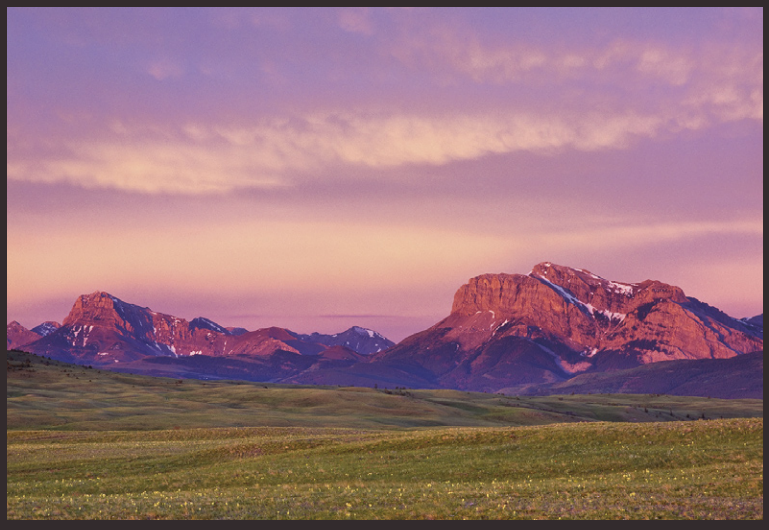
Clockwise from top left: Jess McGlothlin; Donald M. Jones; Teri Reese; Tony Bynum



Clockwise from top: Alex Badyaev; Denver Bryan; Kenton Rowe



Clockwise from top: Vic Schendel; Chuck Haney; John Ashley; Chris McGowan; Dušan Smetana



Clockwise from top left: John Warner; Thom Bridge; Jesse Lee Varnado; Tim Christie; John Lambing; Jeremie Hollman; Sean R. Heavey

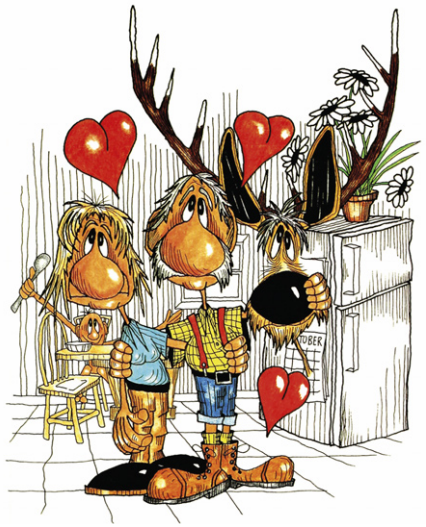
A **FUNNY** THING HAPPENED

Readers of *Montana Outdoors* tell us again and again they enjoy the magazine's humorous essays and illustrations.

Even during the 1970s, the magazine found room to slip in some levity between exposés on land development and denouncements of stream destruction. But it was in later decades that the magazine fully embraced humor as a way to both entertain and inform.

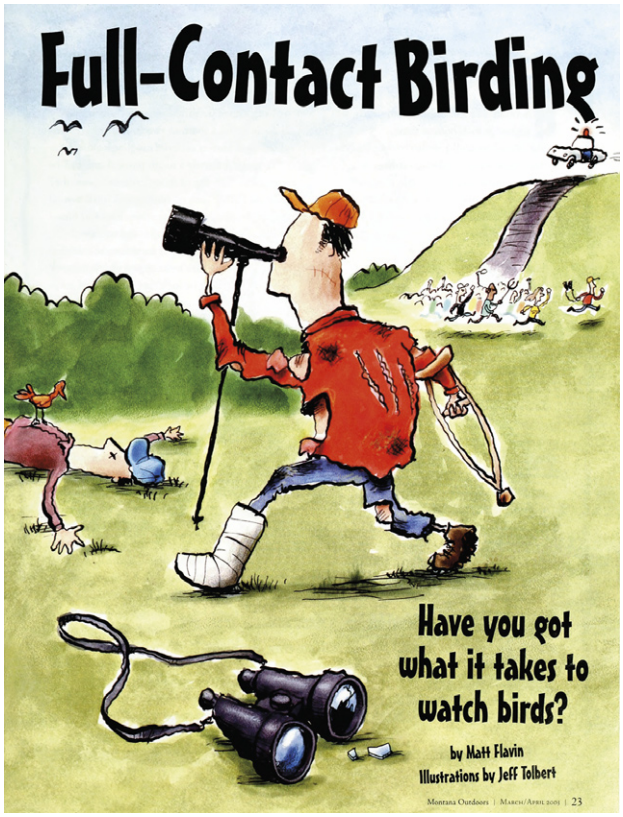
During the magazine's early years, ace cartoonist Vern Craig illustrated articles for which there was no photography available. A notable example was fisheries biologist Dick Vincent's 1972 article detailing his ground-breaking research on planting hatchery fish in the Madison River. Craig also gave many of his sketches an editorial edge, in the style of Pulitzer Prize–winning political cartoonist Jay "Ding" Darling.

Later, editors used humorists to write essays on the follies of turkey hunting, trout fishing, winter camping, and more. Editor Tom Dickson, himself an amateur cartoonist, brought in the works of Jeff Tolbert, Peter Grosshauser, Mike Moran, and other professionals to enliven the magazine's pages. Bruce Auchly, Matt Flavin, Tom France, Mike Korn, Louis Lavoie, Ben Long, and other humorists also have brightened many a reader's day with their written wit and insight.

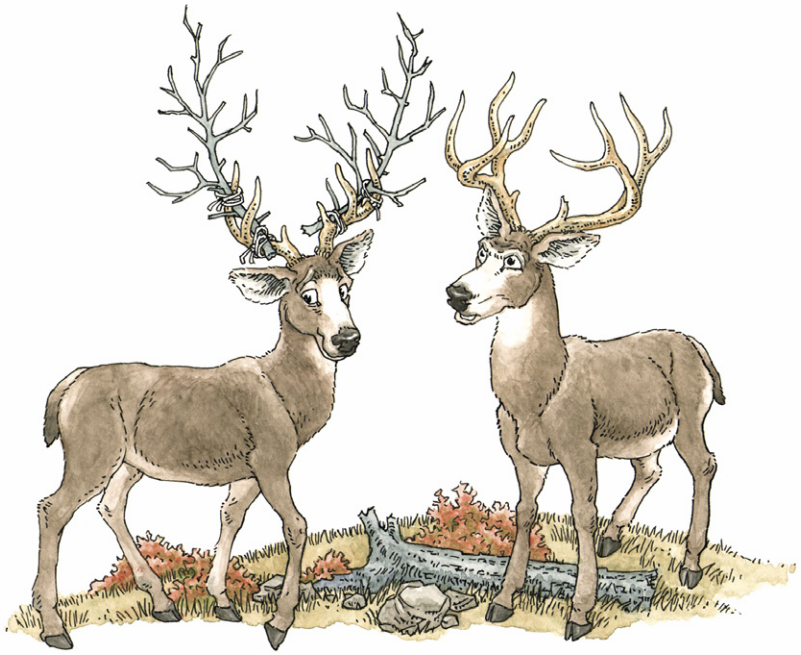


Dave McGee, November-December 1993

John Potter, May-June 1997



Essay by Matt Flavin, art by Jeff Tolbert, March-April 2003



Ed Jenne, November-December 2016

Mike Moran,
November-December 2017

"I always pray for guidance, but it's nice to have GPS as backup."

Tom Dickson, May-June 2009

Jeff Tolbert, May-June 2005

Peter Grosshauser, September-October 2005

Vern Craig, July-August 1974

READY TO ROLL The *Montana Outdoors* team outside the magazine's office in Helena: Angie Howell, circulation manager; Tom Dickson, editor; Luke Duran, art director. Photo by Thom Bridge.

MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

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